



COLUMBUS ("LAND! LAND! LAND!").—T. S. GULLICK.

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THE BRITANNIA HISTORY READERS

BOOK IV MEN AND MOVEMENTS IN EUROPEAN HISTORY

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
CHAPTER I.—THE EMPIRE OF CHARLEMAGNE . . .	9
The Title of Emperor—Constantine—Hermann—Clovis—Charles Martel—Pepin the Short—Charlemagne—Roland and Oliver—The Holy Roman Empire.	
CHAPTER II.—THE DOMINIONS OF THE CALIPHS . . .	27
The Saracens—Mohammed—The Saracen Conquests—Roderick, the Last of the Goths—Haroun-al-Raschid.	
CHAPTER III.—THE NORSE INVASIONS	37
The Treaty of Verdun—Canute—Rolf the Ganger—Rurik and Oleg—The Icelandic <i>Edda</i> .	
CHAPTER IV.—THE HUNS AND THEIR CONQUERORS . . .	48
The <i>Nibelungen Lied</i> —Siegfried—Attila—The Huns—Henry the Fowler—Otto the Great—The Empire under Otto.	
CHAPTER V.—THE FIRST FRENCH KING AND THE POWER OF NORMANDY	60
Hugh Capet—The End of the World—The Peace of the King and the Truce of God—The Guiscards—William of Normandy—Lanfranc.	
CHAPTER VI.—THE EMPEROR AND THE POPE	70
Henry IV. of Germany—Pope Gregory VII.—Power of the Papacy.	
CHAPTER VII.—KNIGHTHOOD AND CHIVALRY	77
The Age of Chivalry—The Page—The Squire—The Knight—The Tournament—The Knight and the Lady.	
CHAPTER VIII.—THE TIME OF THE CRUSADERS	87
Peter the Hermit—Godfrey de Bouillon—Saint Bernard—Frederick I. (Barbarossa)—Cœur de Lion—Frederick II.—Saint Louis of France—Troubadours and Minnesingers.	
CHAPTER IX.—THE ADVANCE OF FRANCE	103
The States-General—Hundred Years' War—King John of Bohemia—King John of France—The Jacquerie—Sir Bertrand du Guesclin—The Maid of Orleans.	

	PAGE
CHAPTER X.—THE SWISS CONFEDERATION AND THE HANSA	111
The House of Hapsburg—The Forest Cantons—William Tell—Morgarten—Sempach—Winkelried—The Hanseatic League.	
CHAPTER XI.—THE CITIES OF NORTHERN ITALY	121
Italian City Republics—Venice—Wedding the Sea—Marco Polo—Florence—Dante—The Divine Comedy—Giotto—The Medici.	
CHAPTER XII.—THE NEW LEARNING IN ITALY	137
Dante and Virgil—Petrarch—The Fall of Constantinople—Lorenzo and Savonarola—Michael Angelo—The Invention of Printing.	
CHAPTER XIII.—THE ADVANCE OF SPAIN	150
Ferdinand and Isabella—The Conquest of Granada—Columbus—Vespucci—Magellan—Charles the Fifth.	
CHAPTER XIV.—THE NEW LEARNING IN THE NORTH	163
Erasmus—John Huss—Martin Luther—John Calvin—The Huguenots—Saint Bartholomew's Day—Henry of Navarre.	
CHAPTER XV.—THE ADVANCE OF HOLLAND	177
The Low Countries—William of Orange—Philip II.—Revolt of the Netherlands—Alva—The Siege of Leyden—The Federal Commonwealth.	
CHAPTER XVI.—THE DECLINE OF THE EMPIRE AND THE ASCENDANCY OF FRANCE	189
The Thirty Years' War—Tilly—Wallenstein—Gustavus Adolphus—Cardinal Richelieu—Louis XIV.—Prince Eugène.	
CHAPTER XVII.—THE KINGDOM OF MUSCOVY	201
A Glance Backward—Vladimir—The Golden Horde—Ivan the Terrible—Chancellor and Willoughby—Peter the Great.	
CHAPTER XVIII.—THE SUNDERED EMPIRE	214
Hapsburgs and Hohenzollerns—Frederick the Great—Maria Theresa—The House of Savoy.	
CHAPTER XIX.—THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND NAPOLEON BONAPARTE	226
A Contrast—The Revolution—Napoleon Bonaparte—The Crossing of the Alps—Austerlitz—Moscow and Leipsic—The Last Phase—Napoleon's Coronation.	
CHAPTER XX.—THE NEW GERMANY	242
The Release of Germany and Italy—The German Confederation—Changes in France—The Franco-German War—The First German Emperor.	
CHAPTER XXI.—THE NEW ITALY	249
The Yoke of Austria—Victor Emmanuel—Cavour—Garibaldi—The New Kingdom of Italy.	

PREFACE

THE aim of this volume is to give to young readers who already have a general knowledge of the history of their own country some account of the great men and movements of European history from the time of Charlemagne to that of Victor Emmanuel. Taking the map of Europe as it stands to-day, an attempt has been made to show broadly how the chief countries had their beginnings, and how they have been in past time related to each other. A certain unity has been imparted to the book by keeping before the mind of the young reader the existence of the Holy Roman Empire, which might be called the central fact of European history. "Without understanding the position of the Empire," says Professor Freeman, "it is impossible rightly to understand the origin and development of the various European states."

THE BRITANNIA HISTORY READERS

BOOK IV

CHAPTER I—THE EMPIRE OF CHARLEMAGNE

The Title of Emperor.—We propose in these chapters to pass in review some of the chief movements in European history from the beginning of the ninth to the latter part of the nineteenth century.

When we read the history of Europe during this period we find frequent mention of a ruler who is referred to by the title of "The Emperor," without any reference to the country or countries over which he ruled.

At the present day the title may be used of the ruler of Germany or Austria or Russia, but in the period of which we are speaking it was given to one ruler only. If we wish to gain an intelligent knowledge of the leading movements in the history of Europe during this time we must first try to get a clear idea of what was meant by "The Emperor."

The title really carries us back to the great Empire

of the Romans, of which our island of Britain formed a part before the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes landed on its shores. This Empire, at its greatest extent, took in all the lands round the Mediterranean, including also the greater part of Spain, the whole of France, then called Gaul, and the southern part of Britain. But it included only a small part of Germany, the home of the Teutons, who were afterwards to send tribes to people the island of Britain, and to succeed to the power of the emperors of Rome. The centre of this great Empire was of course the city of Rome, and the first emperor was Caius Julius Cæsar Octavianus, the adopted son of the great general, Julius Cæsar, who twice invaded Britain before the birth of Christ. Octavius, as the first emperor is generally called in Roman history, was given the title of Augustus, and all the emperors who followed him called themselves Cæsar and Augustus. Hence we sometimes speak of the Roman Empire as the Empire of the Cæsars.

The Emperor Constantine.—One of the most famous of the Roman emperors was known as Constantine the Great. He reigned from 323 to 337 A.D., and during his time great changes were made. He became Christian, and under his rule Rome ceased to persecute the followers of Christ, as she had done with great cruelty under previous emperors. Henceforward Christianity was the religion of the Roman Empire, and the Bishop of Rome, or Pope, became a dignitary of great importance.

Constantine took another step which had a great influence upon the future history of Europe. He fixed the capital of the Empire at Byzantium, a Greek city on the Bosphorus. To this city he gave the name of New Rome, but it was afterwards called the City of Con-

stantine, or Constantinople, a name which it bears to the present day. Rome thus lost its proud position as capital of the whole Roman Empire, but after a while it once more rose to importance, as we shall see.

The removal of the capital caused a division of the Empire into two great portions, and before long there was for a time one emperor in Rome and another in Constantinople. This division lasted for about one hundred years, and then the whole Empire came once again, nominally at least, under the undivided rule of the emperor at Constantinople. But the countries of the West gradually broke away, and were in time overrun and completely changed in character by the German tribes of the North, whom the Romans had been unable to conquer.

The Teutons.—The Teutons or Germans came from the lands east of the Rhine and south of the Baltic Sea. They called themselves *Deutschen*, that is “the people,” and the name Teutons is the Roman form of this word. In their struggles against the Roman legions in the first century the Germans were led by a chieftain named Hermann or Arminius, who reminds us in many ways of Caractacus of Britain. He is said to have been a man of great strength and noble mien, ready and quick in action, yet wary and careful. He served for some time in the army of the Romans and visited Rome itself. At the age of twenty-five he returned to his native land, fired with the idea of uniting all the German tribes and casting off the yoke of Rome.

It was in the year 9 A.D. that Hermann struck his first blow for German liberty. The leader of the Roman legions in Germany was a general named Varus. The army of this leader was marching through the Teutoberger

Forest when it was set upon by the followers of Hermann, who took the Romans completely by surprise.

The Germans were familiar with their surroundings; the Romans were in a strange country—forest land and rough mountain passes swept by the autumn winds and rains. For three days the fight continued. The brave, well-disciplined Romans faced over and over again the fierce onsets of the half-clad Germans, who swept down the mountain-side with impetuous force, singing their war songs and animated by the knowledge that they were struggling for what they held most dear—their liberty and native land. The victory was with the patriots, and the blow inflicted upon his invincible legions struck terror even to the heart of the Roman emperor, whose bitter cry for months was “O Varus, Varus, give me back my legions!”

Hermann fought successfully against the Romans several times after this great victory, and at last they gave up the attempt to subdue Germany. Then the heroic leader fell a victim to the jealousy of other German chieftains, and died by the hand of one of his relatives. “He was undoubtedly,” says a Roman historian, “the liberator of Germany, having dared to grapple with the Roman power, not in its beginnings, like other kings and commanders, but in its strength.”

The Teutons and the Roman Empire.—The Germans were divided into several tribes, among which were the Goths, Angles, Saxons, Lombards, and Franks. In the fifth century we find them making their way into various parts of the western portion of the Empire of the Romans, partly because their own land was being invaded by the fierce Huns, of whom we shall read later. We read in our history of Britain how, in 451, the Roman legions

left our island, having been summoned to the defence of Rome against the East Goths, who lived north of the Danube. These German people in time made themselves masters of Italy, and under their king, Theodoric, the country enjoyed a time of peace and prosperity. Others of the Goths moved into the south of Gaul, and there founded a kingdom, with Toulouse as its centre.

The withdrawal of the Romans from Britain led to the settlement of the Angles with some of the Saxons in our island and the founding of the English nation. The Lombards or Longobards, who came from the banks of the Elbe, moved southward and settled in the rich plain of Northern Italy, to which in time they gave the name of Lombardy.

But we are here chiefly concerned with the Franks, whose original home was in the Rhineland, and who spread westward over the north of Gaul, and eastward to the river Elbe. The land occupied by this division of the Teutonic race was called Francia, or Franconia, and was afterwards divided into an eastern and a western kingdom. The Franks became the chief race of Western Europe, and before long were destined to occupy a still prouder position.

Clovis, King of the Franks.—While the Franks were building up and uniting the various parts of their kingdom they had several rulers whose names are worthy of remembrance. One of these was Clovis,¹ who was at first king of a Frankish tribe in that part of Europe now known as Belgium. He drove the Romans out of the north of Gaul and set up his court at a small town on the Seine, known at that time as Lutetia, and afterwards as Paris. He extended his kingdom in other

¹ The name is the same as the later German *Ludwig* and French *Louis*.

directions, and during his time the Franks became Christian, chiefly owing to the influence of Clothild, the wife of Clovis, who reminds us of the wife of Ethelbert of Kent, to whom Augustine preached at about the same time.

There has been handed down to us a story concerning this Frankish king which shows the relation between him and his followers, as well as the love of justice among the Teutonic tribes even of that rough age.

On one occasion the army, led by Clovis, took and sacked the city of Rheims. The spoil taken by the victors was about to be distributed by lot when the bishop, Remigius, begged of Clovis that a beautiful chalice belonging to the cathedral might be restored to him. The king, wishing to please the bishop, appealed to his warriors and asked them to detach the chalice from the rest of the spoil. All agreed except one man, who suddenly lifted his battle-axe and, bringing it down with a heavy blow, crushed the chalice. "No!" he said, "all must share alike." Though Clovis was king, he had no right to object, for the division of the spoil by lot was the rule among them.

After a time, however, he had his revenge. The man who had crushed the chalice appeared one day at a review with his arms and accoutrements not in perfect order. The king examined the man's axe, and, finding that it was not well cleaned, threw it upon the ground. As the owner stooped to pick it up, the king struck him on the head with his own weapon and laid him dead at his feet.

Clovis reigned for thirty years, and left behind him extensive dominions, which were divided among his sons. We must note in passing that the emperor at Con-

Constantinople considered that this powerful Frankish king was his own officer, acting in his name and under his authority as a Roman consul in the districts over which he ruled. Clovis did not trouble to dispute the claim, which did not in the smallest degree control his actions. Practically he was a free and independent prince, whatever might be his position as defined by the emperor at the court of Constantinople.

Charles Martel.—The Frankish kings who succeeded Clovis were weak and spiritless, and the royal power passed from them in time to the family of a man named Pepin, who held a high office under the crown with the title of Mayor of the Palace.

“Nothing was left to the king,” writes a later chronicler of one of these kings, “except the kingly name; with long hair and flowing beard, he sat on the throne to receive envoys from all quarters, but it was only to give them the answers which he was bidden to give. His kingly title was an empty shadow, and the allowance for his support depended on the pleasure of the Mayor of the Palace. The king possessed nothing of his own but one poor farm, with a house on it, and a scanty number of attendants to pay him necessary service and respect. He went abroad in a waggon drawn by oxen and guided by a herdsman in the country fashion; thus was he brought to the palace or to the annual assemblies of the people for the affairs of the realm; thus he went home again. But the government of the kingdom, and all business, foreign or domestic, were in the hands of the Mayors of the Palace.”

Charles, the son of Pepin, was a famous leader and general, who in the year 732 won a great victory over the Arabs or Saracens. These people, of whom we shall

learn more in another chapter, had overrun Spain and were threatening the kingdom of the Franks. Charles mustered a great army, met the invaders at Tours, and put them to utter rout.

“The Northern nations stood immovable as a wall, or as if frozen to their places by the rigorous breath of winter, but hewing down the Arabs with their swords. But when the Frankish people, by the might of their massive limbs and with iron hands striking straight from the chest their strenuous blows, had laid multitudes of the enemy low, at last they found the Saracen king and robbed him of life. Then night separated the combatants, the Franks brandishing their swords on high in scorn of the enemy.”

At dawn on the following day the Franks saw that the tents of the enemy still stood on the plain before them, and thinking that the Arabs were preparing once more for battle, they mustered in force for the struggle. But before long they found that the invaders had fled over-night, and the tents with their rich hangings—as well as much valuable booty of other kinds—fell to the victors, who returned to their homes in triumph. From the good use which he made of his huge battle-axe in this famous fight the leader, Charles, obtained his surname of Martel, or the Hammer.

Pepin the Short.—Though Charles Martel really held the kingly power he did not take the title of king. This honour, however, fell to his son, Pepin the Short, who had some difficulty in holding together the various portions of the Frankish kingdom which had been left by Clovis, and who received no support from his weak-minded royal master Childeric. Pepin determined to become king in name, as he was already king in power

and influence, but he did not seize the crown by force. He sent to the pope asking for the deposition of the king and his own elevation to the royal dignity. "Does the kingdom," he asked, "belong to him who exercises the power without the name, or to him who bears the name without the power?" The pope wished to please Pepin and gain his help in a struggle with the Lombards of Northern Italy, and therefore sent the little man the answer he desired. So Pepin became King of the Franks, "by the grace of God," as he was styled, in keeping with the sacred character of his appointment, and after having been carried on the shields of his nobles round the house of assembly according to ancient custom, was anointed and crowned. The ceremony was performed by Archbishop Boniface, a native of our own Devonshire, whose preaching and teaching had greatly helped to spread Christianity and civilisation among the Teutons. We must not forget to note that Pepin's appeal to the pope as head of the Church in the West placed the latter in a very high position. It was an acknowledgment that the pope was superior to earthly princes and had the power of appointing or deposing whom he willed. At least so the pope afterwards said, though it is most probable that Pepin would have become king even if the pope had not sent such a favourable answer to his question.

Charles the Great.—In the year 771 Charles, the son of Pepin the Short, became King of the Franks. This monarch was one of the greatest who have ever reigned in any country of the world. In English history he is generally called Charlemagne, which is the French form of the Latin *Carolus Magnus*, Charles the Great. When this king succeeded to the throne he was twenty-nine

years old and in the pride of perfect strength and manly beauty. He stood almost seven feet in height, was well built, and so developed by frequent bodily exercise and activity of life that few men of his time could match him in strength. His face was noble and commanding, and he had the fair complexion and sparkling blue eyes of the typical German. As a king his quiet dignity compelled reverence and obedience; as a friend he was frank, joyous, and hearty; as a father he was tender and kindly, loving the quiet pleasures of his home as a welcome relief from the cares of state.

During his reign of forty-three years Charlemagne was engaged in more than fifty warlike expeditions, the greater number being directed against the tribes who lived to the north of his Frankish territories. Among these were the Saxons, a heathen tribe which occupied the coast territory between the lower courses of the Rhine and the Elbe. These people, under their leader Wittekind, made frequent raids into the eastern portion of Franconia, plundering the villages and killing the inhabitants. Charlemagne marched against them, overthrew the idol temple of their sacred grove, and forced some of them to submit to his authority. Large numbers of the Saxons were also baptized and became Christians. But when the great king was called away from Saxony to lead an army against other enemies Wittekind mustered the Saxons, overcame the Frankish army which had been left behind by the king, and then organised fresh raids into Franconia. Charlemagne again marched against him and, unable to capture the Saxon leader, ordered the execution of some 4500 prisoners on one day. After that he built himself a palace in Saxony and carried on the work of bringing

the whole country into subjection. After many years of fighting, Wittekind surrendered and was baptized. Saxony became part of the dominions of Charlemagne.

Another important campaign was that which was directed against the Lombards of North Italy, who also, after severe fighting, submitted to Charlemagne. Then the conqueror was crowned King of the Lombards with the iron crown which was said to have been made out of one of the great nails by which Christ was fastened to the cross. So the Frankish king went on adding one country after another to his kingdom, and making himself the chief ruler of the western portion of the Roman Empire. In time his dominions embraced the countries now known as France, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, the western part of Germany, and the northern portion of both Spain and Italy.

Roland and Oliver.—But the Frankish king was not always successful. In the early part of his reign it is said he undertook an expedition against the Saracens of Spain, whom Charles Martel had defeated at Tours. The Franks crossed the Pyrenees and drove the Saracens beyond the Ebro. Then their leader led them back into Gaul, having placed the rearguard of his force under the command of one of his chief warriors named Roland. As this portion of the army was making its way through the Pass of Roncesvalles it was attacked by bands of wild mountaineers, who slaughtered the Franks, including their leader, before the king could send relief.

History tells us little about this Roland, but he afterwards became a favourite hero of romance. He was a nephew of Charlemagne, so said the poets and romance writers of a later date, and he was a giant in stature and in strength. The blast of his horn, which could strike

terror into a whole army, might be heard thirty miles away; his spear was of great length and enormous weight; his sword, Durendal, was the handiwork of the fairies, and in his last great fight at Roncesvalles he smote a rock with it and made a fissure of three hundred feet in depth. His deeds were afterwards celebrated in the *Song of Roland*, which was sung by the minstrels of later times to nerve the warriors to deeds of desperate valour. So Taillefer, the Norman minstrel, went into the fight at Hastings:—

Chaunting loud the lusty strain
Of Roland and of Charlemagne,
And the dead, who, deathless all,
Fell at famous Roncesvalles.

Another of Charlemagne's famous warriors or paladins was Oliver, the equal of Roland in strength and valour.

In the *Song of Roland* it is the Saracens who attack the rearguard of the host of Charlemagne, and the two comrades, Roland and Oliver, engage in a desperate struggle against fearful odds. Roland sounds such a mighty blast upon his horn, Olifant, that the blood bursts from his temples. Charles, now thirty leagues away, hears the sound and hastens to the help of his knights. But it is too late. Oliver falls with clasped hands, crying, "Lord, unto me be a place in thy Paradise given. Bless Charlemagne, bless sweet France, and above all men bless Thou Roland, my comrade." Roland fights on "in sweat and in fervent heat," yearning for the coming of his royal master. Trumpets are heard in the distance, and the Saracens

Shrieked each unto other—"The trumpets of France, we have heard them cry!

Lo, he returneth, the mighty king! lo, Charlemagne nigh!"

The pagans take to flight, and Roland is left upon the field. His strength is spent, and he feels that death is upon him—

Under a pine lay Roland the Count ; looking Spain-ward he lay,
And he called to remembrance many and many a thing that day—
The lands he had won, sweet France, the faces of kinsfolk withal,
And his liege lord Charlemagne, who had feasted him aye in his hall.

Then slowly, softly, his head sinks down on his arm upcast ;
Clasped are his hands in prayer—lo, now to his end hath he passed.

Charlemagne becomes Emperor.—While Charlemagne was thus building up his power in Western Europe, at Constantinople the emperors still reigned, claiming lordship over the whole of the Roman Empire, including the dominions of the monarch who called himself King of the Franks and Lombards. But the emperors of Constantinople were as weak as Charlemagne was strong, and at the end of the eighth century the throne of the Cæsars was occupied by a woman, the Empress Irene, who had caused her son, the Emperor Constantine VI., to be deposed and blinded, and had then usurped the imperial power.

At the close of the year 800 Charlemagne happened to be in Rome when the pope determined to take a most important step, in which he knew he would be supported by the people of the city. A woman, they said, could not be Cæsar and Augustus, and the time had come when the Empire should be placed under the rule of a prince both strong and worthy. Accordingly on Christmas Day 800, while Charlemagne was attending a solemn service at the church of St. Peter, the pope crowned him as Emperor of the Romans, and “as in the sight of all he placed upon the brow of the barbarian chieftain the diadem

of the Cæsars, then bent in obeisance before him, the church rang to the shout of the multitude, again free, again the lords and centre of the world, "Karlo Augusto, a Deo coronato, magno et pacifico, Romanorum Imperatori, vita et victoria."¹

Thus Charlemagne, the Frankish king, became the head of the Roman Empire and the successor of Augustus Cæsar. This, at all events, was the view taken by the people of the western portion of the Empire. They held, to quote the words of a well-known historian, "as undoubted and eternal truths, first, that it was a matter of right that there should be a universal monarch of the world; secondly, that that universal monarchy belonged, no less of eternal right, to the Roman emperor, the successor of Augustus; and, thirdly, that the German king was the undoubted Roman emperor, and therefore, of eternal right, Lord of the World."

To the people of the eastern portion of the Empire the change meant nothing at all. According to their view Charlemagne was still only the Frankish king, deriving his authority from the emperor who reigned in Constantinople over the whole of the Empire.

These were the theoretical views of the two parts of the Roman Empire. Practically, the coronation of Charlemagne in Rome divided the Empire into two great portions. There was now a Western Empire, of which Charlemagne was head. Each of his successors who was crowned in Rome by the pope was spoken of as "*The Emperor*," and this title was held by a long line of sovereigns of Western Europe right up to the year 1806.

¹ From *The Holy Roman Empire*, by Prof. Bryce, who renders the Latin sentence—"To Charles, the most pious Augustus, crowned of God, the great and peace-giving Emperor, be life and victory."

The dominions of Charlemagne did not remain intact. As time went on France, Switzerland, Spain, and the Netherlands became separate countries with rulers of their own, who were quite independent of the emperor. But still the Pope of Rome went on crowning one sovereign after another as Cæsar and Augustus, even when the prince who had been invested with this proud title had real authority only over a small part of Europe; just as our kings were called Kings of France long after England had lost or given up all her French territory.

We must not forget to note carefully the share taken by the pope in the claims made on behalf of Charlemagne. The Frankish king was "a Deo coronato," crowned of God, by the hand of the Pope as head of the Christian Church. The Bishop of Rome thus became the spiritual head of the Empire as the emperor was its temporal head. Together they were to rule the world. The coronation on Christmas Day of 800 therefore greatly increased the power and influence of the pope as well as of Charlemagne. As we shall see, the claims of the popes and emperors before long came into conflict.

There was now also an Eastern Empire, which owned the lordship of the emperors in Constantinople. This Empire lasted to the middle of the fifteenth century, when it fell before the Turks, as we shall read in a later chapter.

The Empire of the East is often spoken of in history as the Byzantine Empire, because its capital was at Byzantium, or as the Greek Empire, because most of the people in the lands about the Eastern Mediterranean spoke the language of Greece. The Empire of the West is sometimes called the Latin Empire, because it included the chief lands in which were used languages derived from that of ancient Rome.

Charlemagne's capital was not Rome but Aachen or Aix-la-Chapelle, where he built a palace and church joined together by a colonnade. The church still stands, and forms part of the cathedral at Aix. In the building of it, columns and marble tablets were brought from Rome and from Ravenna, which had been the Italian capital of the Goths, who were a civilised and enlightened race before the Franks rose to power.

Like our Alfred the Great, who became king in Wessex sixty years after the death of the great German ruler, Charlemagne was a lover of learning, of music, and of poetry. He established schools in many parts of his dominions, and took a real and personal interest in the education both of rich and poor. He himself studied under Alcuin, a learned monk, who came to him from the court of Offa, King of Mercia. "He tried to write," says the chronicler, "and for this purpose used to carry about with him tablets and manuscripts, which were placed under the pillows of his bed in order that he might at odd times accustom his fingers to the shaping of the letters; but the attempt was made too late in life, and was not successful."

The German poetry which told of the exploits of the old legendary heroes was the especial delight of Charlemagne, and he caused a collection to be made of all the poems on this subject, which has been unfortunately lost. He encouraged trade and commerce by grants of money from his treasury, as well as by the interest he took in their development. He lived in a very simple manner. His own daughters were taught to work, and many of the garments of their royal father were the product of their industry. The emperor busied himself in his gardens and orchards and in various branches of study.



STATUE OF HERMANN NEAR DETMOLD.

(Hinrichs'sche, Detmold.)

He treated poor and rich with equal kindness, and won the respect and love of all those of his subjects who cared for settled and just government.

The emperor died of a fever in 814, and was buried under the dome of his church at Aix. But his fame lived on through the ages, and he became, like his paladin Roland, the central figure of a number of legends and romances. He is not dead, says one story, but waits, crowned and armed in Odenburg, till the time shall need him, when he will arise and become again the champion of Christendom. He is still the guardian of his people, says another legend, and appears in years of plenty, when he crosses the Rhine on a golden bridge and blesses the cornfields and vineyards. So the poet Longfellow in his poem on Autumn writes:—

Thou standest, like imperial Charlemagne,
Upon thy bridge of gold ; thy royal hand
Outstretched with benedictions o'er the land,
Blessing the farms through all thy vast domain.
Thy shield is the red harvest moon, suspended
So long beneath the heaven's o'erhanging eaves ;
Thy steps are by the farmer's prayers attended ;
Like flames upon an altar shine the sheaves ;
And, following thee, in thy ovation splendid,
Thine almoner, the wind, scatters the golden leaves !

CHAPTER II—THE DOMINIONS OF THE
CALIPHS

The Great Divisions of the Roman Empire.—As we have already seen, Charlemagne became Emperor of the West and ruled from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, from the Ebro to the upper course of the Danube. To the rival emperor at Constantinople belonged the southern portion of Italy, the greater part of the Balkan Peninsula, the peninsula now known as Asia Minor, and the islands of Sardinia, Sicily, and Crete. But there were portions of the ancient Roman Empire which were not included in these two empires of East and West. In the Spanish peninsula Charlemagne did not push his conquests beyond the Ebro, and the Eastern Emperor had by the beginning of the ninth century lost all his authority over the lands of Northern Africa as well as over Syria and Judæa. These lands were then in the hands of the Saracens, who, as we have already seen, threatened at one time to overrun the Frankish dominions, and were defeated by Charles Martel on the field of Tours.

The Saracens.—The Saracens belonged to the same great division of the human race as the Jews or Hebrews, and they claimed descent from Ishmael, the son of Hagar and Abraham. Their home was the peninsula of Arabia, and they were idolaters, worshipping the sun, moon, and stars. Mecca was their holy city, and here was kept within a sacred shrine a stone which they believed had been given to Abraham by an angel.

Then there arose among them a man who gave them a new religion and sent them forth from Arabia to

conquer some of the fairest portions of the Roman Empire, and to found a great Saracen empire stretching from the Atlantic Ocean through the north of Africa to the northern regions of India. This man was Mohammed.

The Prophet of Arabia.—Mohammed was born in Mecca in the year 569 A.D., and was left an orphan in his early youth. He belonged to the tribe or family to whose keeping the shrine of the Sacred Stone was entrusted, and as a boy he is said to have accompanied one of his relatives, a travelling merchant, in several of his trading expeditions. In time he became a merchant himself, married a wealthy widow, and lived till his fortieth year the life of a prosperous Arab trader of Mecca.

Then there came a change. Since his boyhood he had been subject to fits, and when he reached middle life these attacks became more frequent and severe. He left his home for the desert, and there, he asserted, he was visited by the angel Gabriel, who told him that God had chosen him as His prophet, and that he was to go forth and preach to his idolatrous countrymen a new religion. They worshipped many gods, but the message of Mohammed was to be, "There is no god but God, and Mohammed is His slave and His prophet." This was the origin of the Mohammedan religion, the followers of which now number some two hundred millions.

Mohammed at once began his work, but in the first few years he gained very few converts. He, however, made enemies among the people of Mecca, whose living to a great extent depended upon the pilgrims who flocked every year to the shrine of the Sacred Stone. If the old religion was to be overthrown their means of livelihood would also vanish. To them idolatry was a profitable thing, and the preaching of the new prophet was

not to be endured. They therefore plotted to assassinate Mohammed, who, however, was made aware of his danger, and resolved to fly from the city.

In the month of July 622 A.D. the prophet secretly left his native city, accompanied only by his father-in-law, Abu Bekr, who was a firm believer in the mission of Mohammed. The two men travelled by night from Mecca, and took refuge in a cavern among a range of hills to the south of the city. Their enemies commenced a search on the following day, but according to the stories afterwards told they were prevented in miraculous ways from discovering the hiding-place of the prophet.

As soon as the fugitives entered the cave, it is said, a spider wove a web across the entrance. The pursuers came to the very mouth of the cavern, but the sight of the web turned them aside. "Spiders' webs are over it from the birth of Mohammed," they said as they turned away.

Other stories tell how branches of trees sprouted in a few moments to conceal the entrance, and that wild pigeons came and hovered near—a sure sign that no men were within.

When all was safe Mohammed with his faithful follower made his way to Medina. The escape of the prophet from Mecca is known as the Hegira or Flight, and the year in which it happened was afterwards adopted as the beginning of a new age, just as among Christians the years are numbered from the birth of Christ.

The people of Medina received the prophet gladly, and his followers steadily increased in numbers. Then Mohammed changed his methods. Up to this time he had trusted to teaching and preaching for the spread of the new faith. Now he became a warrior and called upon his followers to engage in a sacred war against all

unbelievers. He promised them the joys of Paradise if they fell in battle, and abundance of spoil if they were victorious. Men from all parts of Arabia flocked to his banner, and thus the Saracens began the career of conquest which in a comparatively short time was to establish a mighty empire.

The Conquests and Death of Mohammed.—There were unbelievers in Arabia itself, and Mecca was their stronghold. But in about ten years Mohammed had subdued the whole of the peninsula, and had forced the various tribes to adopt his creed. He was now both the religious and the military head of the country, and the eyes of the Saracens began to turn towards the lands beyond their own boundaries, eastward to the Persian Empire, westward to the Empire of the Romans. Mohammed sent ambassadors to the heads of these two empires. Heraclius, the emperor at Constantinople, at first received them courteously, but afterwards it was said that he had insulted one of them. To avenge this affront Mohammed took possession of part of the Roman dominions lying eastward of Palestine, but this was all the advance that was made during his lifetime. The Persian emperor angrily tore up the letter sent to him by the prophet, who, when he heard of this insult, prophesied the downfall of the Persian Empire at the hands of his followers. This afterwards happened, but our chief concern is with the advance of the Saracens westward into the Roman Empire.

The prophet died at Medina in the tenth year after the Hegira, and was buried on the spot where he breathed his last. His teachings are contained in the Koran (*i.e.* "the reading"), which we may regard as the Bible of the Mohammedans. The contents of the book, it is said,

were given to the prophet by the angel Gabriel himself, and written down at first on fragments of pottery, the bones of animals, and pieces of wood. The follower of the prophet was to believe in one God, Allah, and to pray to Him five times every day. So the muezzin in every Mohammedan city ascends the tall tower or minaret of the mosque and calls the faithful to prayer five times each day, using words which were appointed by the prophet and have been used since his time. And at the call the devout follower of the prophet falls upon his knees wherever he may be, and prays with his face turned to Mecca, the holy city of his faith.

The Saracen Conquests.—The successor of Mohammed was his father-in-law, Abu Bekr. He took the title of Caliph, which is derived from an Arabic word meaning simply "successor," and is the same as Khalifa or Khaleefeh. Following Abu Bekr came Omar, Othman, and Ali, and under these four caliphs the Saracen power was rapidly extended. The beautiful city of Damascus, "the Eye of the East," fell into their hands, and before long Jerusalem also, the holy city of the Christians, was forced to submit to the Caliph Omar.

Having gained command of the Syrian seaports, some of the more adventurous Saracens took ship and sacked several of the wealthy cities of the Greek islands. Then a leader named Amrou led the hosts of the Caliph into the ancient and fruitful land of Egypt, the granary of the Roman Empire. Alexandria was not taken without a struggle, which lasted for more than twelve months, and it was afterwards re-taken more than once by the forces of the emperor. But at last the "great city of the West," as the Saracen leader called it, was finally added to the ever-widening dominions of the Caliphs.

Then the Saracens moved westward and measured their strength with the people of the ancient city of Carthage, which had been a prosperous trading centre before Rome was founded. It was nine years before the Saracens subdued this city, and then they advanced still further westward till their conquests stretched from the Red Sea to the Straits of Gibraltar.

This was in the year 689, not quite sixty years after the death of Mohammed, and now the Saracens stood at the gates of Europe. At one end of the Mediterranean they had pushed their conquests into Asia Minor and were threatening Constantinople. At the other they were ready to cross the narrow strait of Gibraltar and carry the banner of the Crescent into Spain.

From Constantinople they were repulsed, though for six years they besieged the city and made several desperate attacks upon it. The defenders used what was known as Greek fire, which seems to have been a kind of explosive substance somewhat of the nature of pitch. The imperial city was again besieged by the Saracens a little later, but once more they were foiled in their attempts to make a way into the south-eastern part of Europe.

The Conquest of Spain.—In the west they were more successful. The Spanish peninsula was at that time in the hands of the Goths, who, it will be remembered, were a Teutonic people, and therefore of the same race as the Franks. Their king was named Roderick, and he held his court at the city of Toledo. This monarch had an officer named Count Julian, who, having a grievance against his king, treacherously sent messengers to Musa, the Saracen governor in Northern Africa, offering him help in an invasion of the Gothic kingdom.

In the year 710 the Saracen governor sent a small company from Tangier to spy out the land. This expedition found that many of the Goths of Spain were ready to join them—that the cities of Roderick's kingdom were numerous and wealthy, and they returned to Africa in safety to give glowing accounts to their leader.

Then a large force of well-tried veterans was assembled, and placed under the command of a Saracen chief named Tarik. He landed, and is said to have made entrenchments on the rock which now bears the name of Gibraltar, that is Gebel-el-Tarik, the Mount of Tarik, and from thence he prepared to move forward into Spain. Roderick, the Gothic king, was quickly told of the arrival of the Saracens, and he mustered an army numbering between ninety and one hundred thousand men. Then he moved southward to meet the invaders, and the two armies faced each other on a plain near the town of Xeres.

The Saracens were greatly outnumbered, but the Goths were not really so formidable as they appeared. Their king was very different from the dauntless leaders who had founded the Gothic kingdom in Spain. He came upon the field of battle "sustaining on his head a diadem of pearls, encumbered with a flowing robe of gold and silken embroidery, and reclining on a litter or car of ivory, drawn by two white mules." There was discontent and disaffection too among his chiefs, for the king had treated many of his subjects with injustice and cruelty, and it was this mutinous spirit which made victory possible for the Saracens. For at first the battle went well for the Goths, and thousands of their enemies were slain, leaving a comparatively small number, who were only prevented from flying by the bravery of Tarik.

"My brethren," he cried, "the enemy is before you, the sea is behind. Whither would we fly? Follow your general. I am resolved either to lose my life or to trample on the prostrate king of the unbelievers." His words stirred the spirit of his men, who were able at last to hold out until a large number of the Goths deserted their king and joined the standard of the invader. Roderick mounted his fleetest horse and fled northwards. He was never seen again, though his diadem, his robe, and his horse were found on the bank of the Guadalquivir, and it was said that he had been drowned in attempting to cross the stream.

With the help of Count Julian and other Gothic chiefs Tarik pushed on to Toledo, which fell into his hands. In a short time the Saracen power was established over the greater part of Spain, and projects were on foot for the invasion of the lands north of the Pyrenees. How this northward advance was made, and how it was checked by the heroic Frank, Charles Martel, at the battle of Tours, we already know. After this fight the Saracens fell back, and in the time of Charlemagne their European dominions were bounded by the river Ebro.

The Division of the Caliphate.—We have travelled a long way from the centre of the Saracen Empire or Caliphate, which was at Damascus. "At the close of the first century of the Hegira," writes a famous historian, "the Caliphs were the most potent and absolute monarchs of the globe." Their empire reached from Spain to the centre of Asia, for while some of the Saracens had been advancing westward others had moved eastward, had overthrown Persia, and carried the standard of the prophet into Northern India. About fifty years before

the crowning of Charlemagne divided the Roman Empire, the Caliphate was also divided, after many civil wars, into an eastern and a western portion. Spain became an independent Saracen power under an emir or prince of its own, and was later known as the Western Caliphate, with its capital at Cordova. The rest of the Saracen dominions remained under the control of the Caliphs in the east, and with their empire we now have little concern. One of its rulers, however, who lived at the same time as Charlemagne is worthy of a passing glance.

The "Golden Prime" of the Caliphate.—In one of his poems Tennyson tells of the beauty and magnificence of the pavilion or palace of the Bagdad caliphs. The concluding stanza of the poem describes the throne of the successor of Mohammed :—

Six columns, three on either side,
Pure silver, underpropt a rich
Throne of the massive ore, from which
Down-droop'd, in many a floating fold,
Engarlanded and diaper'd
With inwrought flowers, a cloth of gold.
Thereon, his deep eye laughter-stirr'd
With merriment of kingly pride,
Sole star of all that place and time,
I saw him—in his golden prime,
The Good Haroun Alraschid.

The prince here referred to, whose name means Aaron the Just, ruled in Bagdad from 786 to 809, and made the city a centre of culture. At his court lived many Arabian philosophers, physicians, and men of letters, who had gained much of their knowledge from the manuscripts of Greek writers which had been found in the monasteries of the eastern towns captured during the

time of the first Caliphs, and which had been translated into Arabic. The Saracens studied astronomy, chemistry, and geometry, and they wrote books of travel, history, and medicine. They were skilled in the manufacture of mathematical and astronomical instruments, of fine woven fabrics, of sword blades, and various other articles. It is said that they had a knowledge of the composition of gunpowder and of the use of the mariner's compass long before these two things were known and used in the West. They gave us our numerals, and a number of our words derived from Arabic, such as *almanac*, *algebra*, *alkali*, *alcohol*, and *elixir*, testify to their activity in various branches of knowledge.

Haroun al Raschid was powerful enough to exact tribute from the Empress Irene, of whom we have heard. When she died, her successor, the Emperor Nicephorus, tried to break off the Saracen yoke. He sent to the Caliph's court an ambassador bearing a bundle of swords, which were flung in defiance at the feet of Haroun al Raschid. The Caliph drew his scimitar, cut the swords asunder, and said to the emperor's messenger, "Thou shalt not hear, thou shalt behold my reply." In a short time he marched his armies in the depth of winter through the rocky Taurus range, and laid waste several of the provinces of the Eastern Empire with fire and sword.

With the ruler of the Western Empire, however, Haroun was on very friendly terms, and the two monarchs exchanged embassies. The envoys of Charlemagne were shown the wonders of the Bagdad court, and returned to their master laden with costly and curious gifts. The Caliph sent ambassadors to Aix, and Charlemagne strove to impress them by organising splendid and imposing processions of bishops and priests in the cathedral church

of his capital. The Saracens reported to their master that they had seen men "clothed in gold" in the city of the great monarch of the West.

Many of the tales of the *Arabian Nights* are placed in the Caliphate of Haroun, as, for example, the well-known "Sinbad the Sailor," who lived "in the time of Khaleefeh, the Prince of the Faithful, Haroun al Raschid, in the city of Bagdad."

CHAPTER III—THE NORSE INVASIONS

The Treaty of Verdun, 843 A.D.—Before his death Charlemagne caused his son Ludwig, or Lewis, to be crowned in the church at Aix as his successor. In the presence of the assembled nobles Lewis was bidden by his father to place upon his own head the crown of the Frankish kings, and was then solemnly charged "to fear God and to love his people as his own children, to do right and execute justice, and to walk in integrity before God and man."

Lewis was a man of rather weak character, quite unlike his father, and he was unable to rule his own family, to say nothing of the great empire which had been handed down to him. His three sons, Lothar, Lewis, and Charles, quarrelled among themselves, disputing as to the share of the empire which should fall to each on the death of their father. It must be remembered that according to the Frankish method a man's

possessions were divided among his children at his death and did not descend to his eldest son. Lewis made a division more than once before he died, but there was much fighting before the three brothers finally came to an agreement.

At last, in the year 843, the Treaty of Verdun was concluded, and the dominions of Charlemagne were divided into three great portions. Lothar became emperor, and was given a supremacy over his brothers, which was, however, not very real. His dominions included Northern Italy, the eastern part of France, the Rhine country and Holland, forming a long strip of territory which received the name of Lotharingia, and which contained the two capitals Rome and Aachen. To Lewis was given that portion of the empire lying eastward of Lotharingia, and to Charles that which lay to the west.

In this division of the empire of Charlemagne we can trace the origin of at least one modern European state.

The Germany of our own day dates her beginning as a separate nation from the Treaty of Verdun, and in 1843 kept the thousandth anniversary of that event. It is true that her boundaries do not run with those of the dominions of Lewis the German, as he came to be called. For this prince ruled those portions of Europe now known as Austria and Switzerland, while to the eastward his kingdom did not extend so far as does modern Germany. But from the momentous year of the Treaty of Verdun there was a Germany, though the name was not yet used, for Lewis was known as King of the Eastern Franks.

Charles, surnamed the Bald, was King of the Western Franks, and his kingdom included nearly the whole of the France of our time. But his power was not very

great south of the river Loire, nor did he rule Brittany, the westernmost portion of France. We cannot, therefore, say that modern France dates from the Treaty of Verdun, though, broadly speaking, that agreement separated Germany from the territory which after many changes was to become the France that we know.

The name of Lotharingia is handed down to us in Lorraine, the province which now forms part of Germany. From other portions of Lothar's share of the empire there afterwards arose the Netherlands, Switzerland, Burgundy, now included in France, and part of Italy.

The time of Charlemagne might truly be called the "golden prime" of the Western Empire. We have seen how under the strong rule of that great prince learning and civilisation advanced rapidly. But with the break up of his empire there came a check to this advance, for as a rule war is the enemy of progress. And besides the strife within the empire there were fierce attacks from without. In the ninth century the whole of Northern Europe was overrun by the Norsemen or Northmen, and the empire of Charlemagne passed through a time of darkness and almost of despair.

The Northmen.—The Northmen included the Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes, and they belonged to the same race as the Franks, namely, the Teutonic. They had commenced their raids upon the Frankish coasts even before the death of Charlemagne. The great warrior was able to beat them off, but he feared for the safety of his empire when he should be no longer at its head. Tradition tells how he one day saw the black hulls of the pirate ships from a tower in a city by the sea, and burst into tears when he thought of the trouble that was in store for his people.

The Northmen are often spoken of as "vik-ings"—that is, "creek men." They were heathens worshipping Thor and Woden, as the Angles and Saxons and Franks had done before the teaching of such men as Augustine and Boniface. There was no doubt about their bravery and daring, and as little about their wild cruelty. "The first sight of the Northmen," writes an English historian, "is as if the hand on the dial of history had gone back three hundred years. The Norwegian fiords, the Frisian sand banks, poured forth pirate fleets such as had swept the seas in the days of Hengest and Cerdic. There was the same wild panic as the black boats of the invaders struck inland along the river reaches or moved around the river islets, the same sights of horror, firing of homesteads, slaughter of men, women driven off to slavery, children tossed on pikes or sold in the market-place, as when the English invaders attacked Britain. Christian priests were again slain at the altar by worshippers of Woden; letters, arts, religion, government disappeared before these Northmen as before the Northmen of old."

The Northmen in England—Canute or Cnut.—The assaults of the Danes and their final success, in spite of the check they received from King Alfred the Great, are part of the history of England. Alfred died in 901, and for about a hundred years after that date the people of this island were engaged in a constant struggle with the Danes. The struggle ended in the triumph of the Northmen. "All England," says the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, "fought against Canute, but Canute had the victory."

This Canute was King of England, as we know, from 1016 to 1035, but England was only a portion of his vast dominions, for he ruled Norway and Denmark, besides claiming lordship over part of Sweden. He paid

a visit to Rome a few years before his death, and wrote from thence a letter to his English subjects, telling them what he had seen, and how he had been received by the lord pope and the emperor. He had been a fierce warrior, showing little mercy to his enemies, but the visit to the imperial city seems to have softened him. "Be it known to all of you," he writes, "that I have humbly vowed to Almighty God to amend my life in all respects, and to rule the kingdoms and the people subject to me with justice and mercy, giving true judgments in all matters; and if, through the hotness of youth or carelessness, I have in times past exceeded the bounds of justice in any of my acts, I intend, by God's aid, to make an entire change for the better."

The Northmen in Gaul.—The Norse vikings were no less successful in the north of France than they were in England. While bands of them were taxing the patience and endurance of Alfred the Great, others of their kinsmen were making raids into the land of the Western Franks. They made frequent descents upon the northern shores of that land, and in time had several settlements in the country drained by the lower Seine. The centre of the struggle was the city of Lutetia or Paris, which was often raided by the Northmen, but managed to beat them back. At last the invaders determined to gain possession of the city, hoping to make it the centre of a Norse kingdom. In the year 885 they invested it, and began a siege which lasted for about fifteen months.

The city was at that time under the rule of the family of Robert the Strong, who had shown great bravery in resisting the inroads of the Norsemen. He was now dead, but his son, Eudes or Odo, conducted the

defence of the city. A monk of Paris, who was in the city during the time of the siege, wrote an account of it, which is one-sided but picturesque. He tells how, when the Danes had their hair burnt by the fire thrown upon them by the Parisians, the latter cried, "May the Seine water give you new wigs, and better combed." In another place he writes, "When the wall in one place fell down and a breach was made, those within saw the Danes, all helmeted, in a great crowd pressing onward; but as for the Danes they looked through the breach in the wall and counted our great men and dared not enter." "Even during the night," says the good monk, "we heard the whistling of the arrows," and he concludes with the words, "Lutetia, whom God Almighty saved, she that called herself the great town and shone like a queen above the others, her walls looked over the rivers, and she sung her praises."

The Norsemen, however, had not been vanquished by the brave Parisians. Charles the Simple, who was then Emperor of the West, had bought them off in much the same way that our King Alfred was forced to buy off his Norse enemies. Some years later the Northmen obtained from this same emperor a permanent settlement in the land of the Western Franks. But Paris did not fall to their lot. The city had suffered severely, but had not bowed to the yoke.

Rolf the Ganger.—The most famous leader of the Norsemen with whom the Parisians fought was Rolf or Rollo. He was called the Ganger or Walker, because, it is said, he was obliged to go always on foot, being of such weight and stature that no horse could carry him. He was a brave captain and a splendid type of the sea-kings of the time. This leader met Charles the Simple,

and an arrangement was made similar to that made between Alfred the Great and Guthrum. The Danes were to be allowed to settle in the land which afterwards came to be known as Normandy,—that is, the country of the Northmen,—and had a great deal to do with England. A tax was to be levied on the Franks and paid as tribute to Rollo, whose capital was fixed at Rouen. In return for all this Rollo “placed his hands between the king’s hands and became the king’s man,” promised to become a Christian, and received a daughter of Charles as his wife.

The Norse chieftain afterwards became Duke of the Normans, and was the ancestor of William the Conqueror. To the other nobles of the court of Charles he was “Duke of the Pirates.” But Rollo cared little for their scorn, having had the best of the arrangement with the king. He is said to have shown his submission to Charles in the following manner. When he was told that he was expected to kiss the king’s foot, he bluntly refused and told one of his followers to do it for him. The Norseman did not relish the task, though he performed it in his own way. Bending down, he took hold of the royal foot and raised it suddenly to his lips, almost overturning the king in the act. It says little for the reality of the control held by the king over his new vassal that he was forced to pass over the insult without even a word of protest.

The Northmen in Russia.—The ravages of the Norsemen extended to the eastward as well as to the westward of their original home. The Swedes raided the shores of the Baltic, and eventually found their way into the land now known as Russia. This country was occupied by the Slavs, who were divided into many different tribes

or clans. In the middle of the ninth century a Swedish viking named Rurik reached Novgorod, one of the chief cities of the Slavs. Here the Swedish leader settled with his followers, and before long became ruler of the country, or as much of it as his warriors could control. This Rurik became the ancestor of a line of Russian kings who held the throne for more than seven hundred years. He died in 879, leaving his son in charge of a chieftain named Oleg, who stands out in Russian history as a famous warrior and a legendary hero. This leader led an expedition against Constantinople by way of the Black Sea. The Byzantines attempted to block the Bosphorus, but this did not deter Oleg, who is said to have dragged his ships across the land and brought the imperial city to terms of his own imposing.

Igor, the son of Rurik and king in Kiev, which he had made his new capital, was treacherously slain in the territory of a certain tribe named the Drevlians. The vengeance of the widowed Queen Olga was sharp, sudden, and not without treachery. She invited a number of the Drevlians to the king's funeral feast and had them put to death without mercy; others were buried alive, and a great number were suffocated; their town was burnt to the ground by setting free in its streets a large number of pigeons and sparrows with lighted matches tied to their tails. So says Nestor, the old Russian chronicler, who tells also how this same Queen Olga afterwards became a Christian and shone in the midst of paganism "as the moon shines at midnight."

The success attained by Rurik in the land of the Slavs encouraged other Norsemen to try their fortune in the same country. Some of these hardy warriors pushed their way to the northern shore of the Black Sea, and

from thence embarked for Constantinople. There they took service under the Eastern emperor, and a picked number of them were formed into an imperial body-guard known as the Varangians.

The Northmen in Iceland.—We have not yet indicated all the directions taken by the bands of Norse vikings in their migration from the lands round the Baltic Sea. Some of them sailed far away to the north-west, where they settled in the island of Iceland towards the end of the ninth century. Here they had to fight not with men, but with the stern forces of nature. Yet even in this inhospitable island they made a permanent settlement, establishing a kind of republic, and in time making the far-off island a centre of learning and literature in an age which had little time or care for the gentler arts of peace. There were many scalds or gleemen among the Icelandic settlers, who sang of the great deeds of the vikings, and the songs of those men were handed down orally till they were set down in writing by a Christian priest called Sigfussen, and formed, with other material, the collection known as the poetic *Edda*. In the twelfth century another Icelandic, named Snorro Sturleson, made a second collection, this time of prose legends, which is called the prose *Edda*, to distinguish it from that made by Sigfussen. Some of the sagas or stories of these Eddas tell of the Norse gods and jotuns or giants, which were really personifications of the powers of nature. Balder, the White God, the beautiful and benign, is the sun; Thor, bearer of the hammer, is the thunder. Frost or rime is the hoary giant Thrym. The sea-tempest is the jotun Aegir. The father of the gods and king of men is Odin, Woden, or Wuotan, who seems to have stood for force, movement, power—that which keeps the universe together,

enfolding and governing all things. He is a man too, this chief god of the Norsemen, a kind of type of what every Norse viking strove to be—strong, brave, reliant, void of fear.

“It is doubtless very savage,” says Carlyle, “that kind of valour of the old Northmen. Snorro tells us that they thought it a shame and misery not to die in battle; and if natural death seemed to be coming on, they would cut wounds in their flesh, that Odin might receive them as warriors slain. Old kings about to die had their body laid into a ship; the ship sent forth, with sails set and slow fire burning it, that, once out at sea, it might blaze up in flame, and in such manner bury worthily the old hero at once in the sky and in the ocean! Wild, bloody valour, yet valour of its kind; better, I say, than none. In the old sea-kings too, what an indomitable rugged energy! Silent, with closed lips, as I fancy them, unconscious that they were specially brave; defying the wild ocean with its monsters and all men and all things—progenitors of our own Blakes and Nelsons.”

Effects of the Norse Invasions.—We must note carefully that except in Iceland the Northmen did not anywhere found a separate Norse state. In England they were in time absorbed into the English race, adopted their language, and became in fact Englishmen. It must be remembered, however, that they were of the same race as the Angles and Saxons, whom they fought, and therefore would not find it difficult to fall into their ways. This fact does not, however, account for the manner in which the Normans became completely absorbed among the West Franks, who spoke what we might call the old French tongue. They became French-

men, and English history tells us how great was the difference at the time of the Conquest between the Normans and the English, who sprang originally from one race. In Russia the Norse settlers also became Russians, changing their speech and manners till they were those of the Slavs, to whom they had given a ruler.

"No race," writes a famous historian, "has ever shown a greater power of absorbing all the nobler characteristics of the people with whom they came in contact or of infusing their own energy into them."

We find, however, traces in the languages of England and France and Russia of the Norse invasions of a thousand years ago. And the mixture of such a hardy race as the Vikings with the people of each of these three countries helped to make the latter more hardy and better fitted for the struggle for national existence which was to make the Europe we know to-day.

CHAPTER IV—THE HUNS AND THEIR CONQUERORS

The “Nibelungen Lied.”—In the *Nibelungen Lied*, a German legendary poem of the thirteenth century, we are told of the exploits of Siegfried, the young and handsome King of the Netherlands. This hero had a sword named Balmung, which had been forged by the blacksmith of the Teutonic gods, and a cape or cloak which had the power of rendering him invisible. After his victorious fight with a great dragon he bathed in the blood of the fallen monster, and thus made himself invulnerable, except in one spot between his shoulders, where a linden leaf had rested during his bath of blood.

Nibelung, King of Norway, had a bodyguard of twelve giant warriors, who were overcome by Siegfried, and then the hero went in search of a wife, upon whom he determined to bestow the immense treasure he had won by his prowess. His choice fell upon Kriemhild, whose brother, Gunther, King of Burgundy, wished to marry a princess named Brunhild. But the last-named lady declared that she would not marry till she found a man who could beat her in hurling the spear, throwing the stone, and leaping. Helped by Siegfried, Gunther was able to win the hand of Brunhild, and then he used his influence in bringing about the marriage between his friend and his sister.

The two ladies afterwards quarrelled, and Brunhild had Siegfried stabbed to death while he was stooping to drink after a hunting expedition. The man who struck the fatal blow between the hero's shoulders was Hagan.

He seized the treasure of Siegfried and sank it in the Rhine, where it was lost. Kriemhild became the wife of Attila, King of the Huns. Some years afterwards she



SIEGFRIED AND THE DRAGON.

invited Gunther, Brunhild, and Hagan to the Hungarian court, and during the visit the slayer of Siegfried killed the son of Attila. A general battle followed, and both

Gunther and Hagan were taken prisoners. They were put to death by Kriemhild herself, who cut off their heads, and thus revenged her wrongs. Such in outline is the story of the *Nibelungen Lied*, which was handed down orally from generation to generation long before it was first put into writing. One of the persons named in it takes a large part in the early history of Europe. This was Attila, the King of the Huns, the second husband of Kriemhild.

The Huns or Magyars.—Who were the Huns, and whence did they come? Their original home was in the central part of Asia, and they moved westward into Europe in the fourth century. They were a wandering people, like many of the tribes of Central Asia at the present day. They had very swift horses, and the men seemed almost to live in the saddle, for they ate their food and sometimes even slept on horseback. Outdoor life and constant exercise had made them very hardy, and they appeared to have lost all sensibility to changes of climate. As a race they were small of stature, but broad-shouldered and very strong and muscular. They had straight black hair, small eyes, thick lips, and the skin of their faces was like yellow parchment.

These people swarmed into Europe in countless hordes, and settled in the lands north of the Danube. There they founded the kingdom of Hungary, which was the origin of the state which now forms part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. But they did not rest there, for in the fifth century Attila, who is known in history as "the Scourge of God," made attempts to extend the borders of his kingdom in several directions. He marched into Gaul, but was defeated in the north of that country and forced to retire into Hungary. After

the death of this great warrior, who had carried war and devastation over the whole of Western Europe, the kingdom of the Huns fell into confusion. In the ninth century, however, they seem to have become more united, for they began to make great raids upon the land of the Eastern Franks, which we will now call Germany. They burnt the towns, slew the people, and plundered the monasteries in much the same way as the Norsemen were doing at the same time in England and Gaul. For a long time the Germans were too weak to make any real resistance, but in the beginning of the tenth century there arose a German king who delivered his country from her barbarian enemies, at least for a time.

Henry the Fowler.—When the race of Charlemagne had died out, the great nobles of Germany elected as king one of their number who was thought to be best fitted for the high office. The German king to be chosen was named Conrad, who ruled for about eight years, and during his reign went to war with Duke Henry of Saxony, a descendant of Wittekind, who had withstood so successfully the great Charlemagne himself. When Conrad lay dying he advised his brother to support the election of Duke Henry as his successor. "I know," he said, "that no man is worthier to take the throne than my enemy, Henry of Saxony. Do not you think of yourself in opposition to the general good. We Franks have might and strong cities and all that royal splendour requires; but something more than that is needed, namely, great prudence and wisdom, and that Henry has. When I am dead take him the crown and the sacred lance, the gold armlets, the sword and the purple mantle of the old kings, and so make Henry your

friend. Tell him and the princes that my last advice is that he should succeed me."

The princes took the dying king's advice, and sent to offer the crown to Henry of Saxony. It is said that the messengers found him in a valley near the Hartz Mountains engaged in hawking, whence he afterwards came to be known as Henry the Fowler. The duke accepted the trust offered to him, and at a meeting or diet of the nobles he was lifted upon the shield, according to Teutonic custom, and saluted as king.

Strong and well-supported as he was, King Henry was not able to deal successfully with the repeated attacks of the Huns. He therefore resolved to buy them off as Alfred the Great bought off the Danes. This seemed a cowardly thing, but Henry knew what he was doing. He wished to gain time for working out a scheme of his own, and was quite willing to take upon himself the disgrace of paying tribute for a time to the invaders. He bargained with them for a truce of nine years, and then set to work to carry out his plan.

The Nine Years' Truce.—King Henry made good use of the breathing time he had purchased from the Huns. He saw quite plainly that if he was to put a stop to their invasions he must have a strong army and a strong frontier. Under his guidance active steps were therefore taken to secure a national army well equipped and well trained. The nobles were exercised in sham fights or tournaments, as they came to be called, and many of the peasant foot soldiers were taught to fight on horseback. The eastern and south-eastern frontiers of the kingdom were strengthened by the building of fortified towns or burgs, in each of which was placed a garrison of soldiers drawn from the men of the surrounding district. One

man out of every nine was compelled to serve in the garrison, and the remaining eight were taxed to pay for his support. Every year great stores of grain were placed within these fortified posts as a preparation for a time of siege. The Germans did not at first take kindly to the walled towns, for they loved the open country, but in time they learnt their value, and others were built within the frontier. Thus Henry earned his other title of "the Founder of Cities."

Near the end of the time of truce the king tested the strength of his army by marching against the Slavs, who at that time occupied the lands east of the river Elbe. During this successful campaign Henry added to his German kingdom the province of Brandenburg. This is worthy of special note, for the province became the basis of the kingdom of Prussia, which was afterwards to play a great part in the founding of the German Empire of our own day. Henry also extended his boundaries eastward till they reached from Stettin, on the Baltic, to the city of Vienna, on the Danube. To the south-east of the German kingdom a border state called the Eastern Mark had been set up as a kind of safeguard against the Huns, just as English kings established marches in the west of England as a protection against the Welsh. This Eastern Mark, or Oesterreich, became afterwards the Duchy of Austria, which now forms a state independent of Germany, and is ruled by a sovereign who is also king of the modern Hungary.

At the end of the nine years the Huns sent messengers to demand the usual tribute from the German king. The payment was refused, and it is said that Henry caused a dead dog to be flung at the feet of the

envoys as a mark of his defiance and contempt. This treatment had the effect which Henry expected, for the Huns at once poured into his kingdom in great numbers. This time, however, they did not carry all before them. They found the fortified posts on the frontier too strong to be taken, and the well-trained German soldiery proved the value of their careful training by the steadfast way in which they withstood the enemy. The burgs also became places of refuge in time of need as well as a menace to the retreat of the Huns to their own land. After a great deal of fighting Henry met the main army of the invaders and won a decisive victory at Merseburg. At the close of this wild and desperate struggle more than thirty thousand of the Huns lay dead on the field, and the victorious German king is said to have been greeted by his army with loud shouts of "Henry the Emperor!" The Huns did not again trouble the northern part of Germany, though it was not till the time of Otto, the son of Henry, that they were finally driven back within their own borders.

Otto the Great.—The victorious Germans on the field of Merseburg had no real right to acclaim their leader as emperor, for though Henry was King of Germany he had not been crowned at Rome as the successor of Charlemagne; nor did he ever become emperor, though it is thought that he wished to subdue Italy and get the pope to crown him as Caesar Augustus. For some time, however, there had been no emperor, or at least none who had any real claim to the title. It was left to Otto, the son and successor of Henry the Fowler, to unite the crowns of Italy and Germany and to found anew the Empire of the West. This great ruler was only twenty-four when he was elected to succeed his father.

He was a stern, energetic, and ambitious man, far-seeing and generous, though not so prudent as Henry the Fowler. "His demeanour was full of majesty," says a chronicler, "his fair hair waved over his shoulders, his eyes were bright and sparkling. His beard was of very great length." The coronation of the new king at Aix presented a scene of great splendour, and at the feast which followed the ceremony Otto was waited upon by the highest nobles of the land. There is no doubt that one of the king's weaknesses was a love of pomp and display. His first wife was Editha, daughter of Athelstan, the Saxon king of England, but she died before her royal husband attained to the height of his power.

Otto and the Huns.—In the year 955 the Huns again entered Germany and laid siege to Augsburg. They had gathered strength once more after their great defeat by Otto's father, and now they had come in force, boasting that their steeds would drink the rivers dry and stamp the towns to dust. The town of Augsburg offered a splendid opportunity for plunder, for it stood on the route taken by the German merchants into Italy, and was a very wealthy place. It was encircled by a strong wall and a moat, which baffled the attempts of the fiery Huns to carry the place by storm. Over and over again they attacked the walls, and each time they were repulsed. At one time a gate was opened by the defenders and a party of citizens rushed out across a drawbridge, fell upon the Huns, killed one of their leaders, and retreated in safety within the gate, carrying his shield as a trophy.

Otto gathered a great army and moved to the relief of the besieged town. He engaged the Huns in a fierce battle outside its walls while the defenders sallied out to his help. Foremost among the German leaders was the

brave Conrad of Lorraine, whose daring and valour decided the fortune of the day. Nearly all the Huns were either killed or drowned in the river Lech, and never again did they attempt an invasion of Germany. Conrad, however, fell in the fight. The day was very hot, and he lifted his visor to breathe more freely, when an arrow from the Hungarian host pierced his neck and he fell dead from his horse. Once again, it is said, the German king was hailed by his soldiers as emperor, with loud cries of "*Imperator Augustus, Pater Patriae.*"¹ Whether or no this is true, there is no doubt of the fact that "men still thought, as they had thought in the centuries before Charlemagne, that the empire was suspended, not extinct, and held the belief that without it the world could never be right." Before long Otto was destined to realise the dream, as we shall now see.

Otto becomes Emperor.—Italy had for a long time been the battleground of a number of rival kings and popes, who fought among themselves with little or no care for the good of the country. More than one of these kings had been crowned as emperor by the pope, an empty and meaningless ceremony, for their authority did not extend beyond the small portion of territory which their men-at-arms could overawe. Shortly before he defeated the Huns, Otto had been invited into Italy under the following circumstances.

The ruler of Italy was a rough, brutal man named Berengar, who wished to marry Adelheid, the widow of the king whom he had succeeded. This princess was at that time only nineteen years old, and is said to have been very beautiful. She refused the offer of Berengar, who then seized her and cast her into a loathsome prison,

¹ "Emperor Augustus, Father of (his) Country!"

where she was treated with great indignity. Adelheid, however, managed to make her escape, and to send a messenger to King Otto, who was a friend of her brother, asking for his help in her distress.

Otto replied by marching an army into Italy, where he defeated Berengar, who was forced to do homage to the German king. Then the conqueror, whose wife, Editha, had died some time before, married Adelheid and left the country, leaving Berengar to rule under the overlordship of Germany. This arrangement lasted for about ten years, during which time Berengar ruled very badly and several times broke the oath which he had taken before his overlord. The pope therefore appealed to Otto to deliver Italy from Berengar altogether. The German king once more marched across the Alps and was crowned with the iron crown as King of the Lombards. This was but a step to a greater dignity. On the 2nd of February in the year 962 he was crowned in Rome by the Pope as Emperor of the Romans.

There was, however, a difference between the empire of Charlemagne and the empire of Otto, and it is important that we should try to understand what this difference was. Charlemagne claimed authority over the whole of the ancient Roman Empire, east and west, but really ruled the whole of Central Europe. Otto also claimed authority over the whole of the Roman Empire, but really ruled Germany and Italy. France had become detached from the empire, and was gradually being formed into a separate kingdom. From the time of Otto the emperor was as a rule a German king. While the empire lasted the King of Germany claimed as a right to be crowned King of the Lombards at Milan and Emperor at Rome. Sometimes there was no emperor, for each

German king did not succeed in reaching Rome to be crowned by the pope. But from Otto's day to the beginning of the nineteenth century there was always an emperor or a German king who had a right to be crowned as emperor. The empire of Otto then we may call a new thing, so long as we do not forget the claim of world-lordship which lived on even though Europe was gradually splitting up into separate and independent states. At a later date it came to be called the Holy Roman Empire, and under this title we shall sometimes speak of it.

The coronation of Otto by the pope was neither a good thing for Germany nor for Italy. While France went on steadily growing into a powerful nation, Germany and Italy remained each split up into a number of smaller states which were continually quarrelling among themselves. We shall before long find France taking a leading place in Europe, but we must wait till the nineteenth century before we see a united Germany or a united Italy. Still the crowning of Otto as Caesar Augustus was hailed by the wisest men in his two kingdoms as the beginning of a new and better age.

Shortly after his coronation Otto once more had to march into Italy to put down a rebellion headed by no less a person than the pope. He took Rome by storm, deposed the pope, and gave his office to another man whom he could trust. As soon as he had returned to Germany the Lombards rebelled, and the people of Rome deposed the pope he had appointed, setting up another in his place. Once more the emperor crossed the Alps and restored order. He gave back to the pope certain lands near Rome, which were henceforth to belong to the Church and to be ruled by the pope, who thus became a

temporal prince under the emperor. These lands had been given to the pope by Pepin, King of the Franks, but had afterwards been captured by the Lombards.

Otto married his son, who bore his father's name, to a daughter of the Byzantine emperor. This princess was named Theophania, and she was both beautiful and intelligent. She came from a court which was much more refined and cultured than those of the Western kings, and she doubtless thought that her lot had fallen among barbarians. But the people of Western Europe were gradually becoming more civilised in every way. Henry the Fowler and Otto the Great had checked the inroads of the savage and heathen Huns. The Norsemen were settling down in the lands which they had conquered, and had forsaken Thor and Odin for the "White Christ," and though wars were frequent among the various kingdoms, duchies, and principalities of Europe, the dark ages of heathendom had passed away for ever. We may therefore assign what we might call the revival of civilisation to the time of Henry the Fowler and Otto the Great.

CHAPTER V—THE FIRST FRENCH KING AND THE POWER OF NORMANDY

Hugh Capet—King of the French.—We have seen how Charles the Simple, the King of the Western Franks, was obliged to make terms with Rolf the Ganger, and to allow the Northmen to settle near the lower course of the Seine. Charles had his court at Laon, a small town in the north-east of France. He spoke German and was surrounded by German nobles, who refused to have any intercourse with the French. Consequently there grew up among the great barons of the country a feeling of hostility towards the court at Laon, which led in time to quarrels and bloodshed. For many years this strife continued, and it led in 987 to the selection of Hugh Capet as King of the French.

Hugh was Duke of the Franks and head of the noble family of Paris, which saved that city from the Northmen. In him "France has at last a French king," and from the year of his accession she dates her history as an independent nation. He was the ancestor of a long line of French monarchs reaching to the nineteenth century. The surname of Capet was most probably a nickname given him because of the "cape" or "cap," a kind of monkish cowl or hood, which he wore over his head, for it is said that he refused to wear a crown.

But though his accession marks the birth of French nationality, he had little real power beyond his own territory near the Seine. It is true that several of the great dukes of the country acknowledged him, among them the powerful Duke of Normandy, but they did as

they pleased within their own lands and considered themselves equals with the king. "Who made you count?" demanded Hugh of a noble who had refused to do his bidding. "Who made you king?" was the retort, which shows how the so-called vassals looked upon the king of their own choosing. Hugh was obliged also to fight for his crown with a descendant of Charles the Simple, who set up a rival court at Laon. He was successful, but the rest of his reign was a constant struggle against his powerful neighbours. He bought his royal title by a life of unceasing toil and anxiety and the loss of many of his family estates, which he gave to his barons to pay for their services. Yet we must regard him as the first French king, and his reign as the beginning of a new epoch.

The End of the World.—Hugh Capet died in 996, and during the time of his three immediate successors France passed through a time of great trouble and distress. The times were evil and the kings were weak; the land was full of strife and bloodshed; there was no respect for law and order; every man did what seemed good to himself. The barons defied the king, and, sallying forth from their strong castles, they plundered the peasant, the farmer, and the merchant; they fought against each other and laid waste the fair land of France with fire and sword; crimes of all kinds went unreprieved and unpunished, and the country was full of misery.

There was also an idea abroad, not confined to France alone, that the year 1000 was to see the end of the world. This added to the terror of the time and made many lawless men more reckless than ever. Numbers of rich people went on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, or gave great gifts of land and money to the Church in the hope

of averting the wrath of God. The peasants refused to till the soil and waited, many of them in an agony of suspense, for the end, which they felt sure was about to come. As the time drew near, crowds of people gathered in the churches or near the monasteries in order to spend their last hours in holy places. The awful day dawned amid a dread, expectant silence, broken only by the prayers and supplications of the waiting people. But as the hours went by and no change was visible in heaven or earth, hope once more revived in the hearts of men.

But the fields lay untilled, and when harvest time came there was nothing to reap. Famine overtook the land and pestilence followed in its train. Efforts were made to cope with the dreadful state of the country, but the weary years wore on and the distress showed no sign of abating. "The miseries of mankind in Gaul," says a historian, "were incredible; the seasons seemed to have wandered from their courses—there was such cold, such wind and rain, as had never been known. For three years—1030 to 1033—there was neither seed-time nor harvest, and famine ruled the land. . . . The poor folk in their despair ate roots and grass; they dug up white clay and devoured it. Paleness and dreadful leanness was on all faces; their bones could be counted; their voices grew thin and piping like the voices of birds; wolves came out in troops and fed on human carcasses."

After a time things grew better, but the famine and the pestilence had taken a fearful toll of human life.

The "Peace of the King" and the "Truce of God."—The lawless barons were not awed in the least by the awful troubles in the first years of the eleventh century, and still went on with their endless wars and cruel oppression of the poor. But in 1036 the clergy made an attempt

to check their disorder. They gained the consent of several of the more powerful barons to the observance of what was called *The Peace of the King*. This forbade any knight or lord to engage in a private war till forty days after the offence against him or his had been committed. In this way fierce passions had in many cases time to cool down and the country was saved from some of the miseries of civil war. Private wars were not, however, done away with, and in 1041 the clergy tried once more to bring the unruly barons to a sense of their duty as followers of the Prince of Peace. They proclaimed the *Truce of God*, which forbade fighting between Wednesday evening and Monday morning of each week, and during certain appointed seasons of the year. They also gave the right of "sanctuary" in their churches to those who had done wrong and were flying from the avenger, or to those who sought protection from an oppressor. Once within the sacred building, or even upon its threshold, they could not be harmed, and the right acted in many cases as a check upon lawless men. Thus we find the clergy engaged in the good work of taming the fierce passions of the men of a rough time, and laying the foundations of that respect for law and order which is now to be found in every civilised country.

The Guiscards.—The most powerful vassals of the first French kings were without doubt the dukes of Normandy. Their subjects, the Normans, had become Frenchmen, but the old spirit of adventure still lived among them, and during the middle of the eleventh century we find them making their presence felt beyond the boundaries of Normandy and France. Numbers of them passed into Spain and fought with the Moors, who held the south of that land, but these expeditions had

no lasting result. Others made their way to the south of Italy and the island of Sicily, and there set up a state which afterwards came to be known as the kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Among the founders of this kingdom were two brothers named Robert and Roger Guiscard or Wisard, *i.e.* the prudent or crafty ones. Robert, the elder, was the chief means of establishing the Normans in Southern Italy, which, as it may be remembered, formed part of the Eastern Empire. Roger Guiscard fought chiefly in Sicily against the Saracens, who had their capital at Palermo. The war in Sicily was looked upon as a kind of holy war, for the Saracens or Arabs were Mohammedans, and during the long struggle many deeds of prowess were done by the Normans.

At one time, we read, Roger was so hard pressed that he sent to his brother for help. The elder Guiscard was unable to send any assistance, and when the Saracens got to know this they came on to the attack reinforced by a large number of Africans. They took up a position on a hill not far from the Norman camp, and when Roger saw how greatly he was outnumbered he doubted for a moment whether it was wise to make the attack. The order, however, was given to storm the enemy's position.

As the Normans moved forward an unknown warrior in magnificent armour, mounted on a white charger and carrying a lance, on which glittered a golden cross, spurred forward from amongst them. "St. George! St. George to the rescue!" shouted the soldiers, believing that the patron saint of all true knights had appeared to fight for the Cross against the Crescent. The cry gave them vigour, and in the enthusiasm of the moment they drove the great army of Saracens from their position and put them to flight. The Norman leader singled out the

Emir or Prince of Palermo, who was splendidly mounted and wore strong chain armour. There was a desperate struggle, but the victory fell to the Norman, who unhorsed and slew his opponent.

The Norman Conquest of England.—The other great Norman expedition of that time led to the establishment of a line of Norman kings on the throne of England. As we know, it was led by William, Duke of Normandy, who won his title of the Conqueror on the field of Senlac. "This was a fatal day to England," writes the English chronicler,—“a melancholy havoc of our dear country through its change of masters,” and he also describes the Norman invaders as “a race inured to war, and can hardly live without it; fierce in rushing against the enemy, and where strength fails of success, ready to use stratagem or to corrupt by bribery.”

We have learnt something of William the Conqueror from our English history. We have read of his strength and his sternness, his craft and his cruelty; we remember his Domesday Book, his fondness for hunting, how he “loved the tall stags as if he were their father,” and we can picture that last scene of all when, in the minster at Caen, he was refused a place of burial by a man whose land he had taken by force to build the house of God. He was before all else a masterful man, as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* tells us. “The rich complained and the poor murmured, but he was so sturdy that he recked not aught of them; they must will all that the king willed if they would live, or would keep their lands, or would hold their possessions, or would be maintained in their rights.” It was this determination and force of will which raised the Norman duke to a position of much greater power and influence than the King of France, to

whom he was in name a vassal, and in reality a dangerous rival.

Before the Norman Conquest, England had not much to do with the continent of Europe. She was cut off by the sea, which served her

in the office of a wall,
Or as a moat defensive to a house
Against the envy of less happier lands.

But now she became closely connected with Europe, and especially with France, and the connection was not altogether to her advantage as a nation. She did not, however, become Norman, for in a comparatively short time the conquerors were absorbed among the conquered, the Norman-French language gave place to the mother-tongue, and England gradually won for herself a distinct national position quite independent of her connection with the continent of Europe.

The Norman Conquest gave a short breathing time to the King of France, who had viewed with alarm the growing power of his vassal, the Duke of Normandy. But it led afterwards to constant wars between the monarchs of the two countries, as we know from our English history.

Lanfranc of Pavia.—One of William's most trusted advisers was a churchman named Lanfranc, whom the Conqueror made Archbishop of Canterbury. Lanfranc was a native of Pavia in Lombardy, and became a student of Roman law and an eloquent pleader in the courts of Northern Italy. He left his native city some years before the Norman Conquest and wandered on foot into Normandy, where he had heard there lived a monk of great sanctity. This was Herlouin, who had been a knight in the Norman court, and had then become a monk. He

founded a settlement on one of his estates, which afterwards grew into the famous monastery of Bec. Lanfranc had many dangers to face on his lonely journey, for the roads, as we know, were infested by robbers, and at one place he was robbed, stripped almost naked, beaten, and tied to a tree by a band of Normans. Hearing the sound of horses' hoofs some hours afterwards, he shouted loudly for help. A number of horsemen came up who took pity on the poor scholar, cut his bonds, and asked him whither he was bound. He told them that he wished to find Herlouin, that he might become a monk under his rule. "Would they set him on his way for the love of God?" They did, and the way did not prove to be long, for the Lombard scholar had reached without knowing it almost the end of his long and perilous journey.

Descending a hill not far away, he came upon a fruitful valley, in which stood a few small huts surrounded by gardens, orchards, and cornfields. Near one of these huts he saw a man in a monkish habit engaged in building an oven or bakehouse. The worker turned round and looked keenly at the stranger. "God save you!" said Lanfranc in greeting. "God bless you!" said the other; then with a keener glance at the new-comer's face, "You are a Lombard." "I am," answered Lanfranc. "What do you want?" asked Herlouin. "To be made a monk," was the reply as the scholar fell to the ground and kissed the feet of the worker, who, he was now quite certain, was none other than the saintly Herlouin himself. The stranger's prayer was granted. He became a member of Herlouin's community and took into his hands the work of teaching the monks. By and by his fame as a scholar and teacher spread throughout Europe, and men flocked from all parts to be taught by the Prior of Bec.

Lanfranc at one time gave offence to William of Normandy, who commanded him to leave his duchy. The prior made ready to leave the monastery, and selecting a very aged and lame horse, he set out, attended by a single servant, for Rouen, the Norman capital. On the way he met Duke William, who was riding from the town among a company of gaily dressed and splendidly mounted courtiers. The duke laughed outright when he saw the traveller on his feeble steed, which limped along the road with its nose almost to the ground. But his countenance changed when he learned that the stranger was the Prior of Bec who had defied him, and he spoke angrily to Lanfranc. But the monk said mildly, "By your commands I am leaving your dominions, but it is only at a foot's pace that I can proceed on such a wretched beast as this; give me a better horse and I shall be better able to obey your commands."

The coolness of the request and the simple, fearless manner of the man checked William's anger. He knew a man when he saw one, and this scholar of Bec was too good to lose, for the age had more men of brute strength and courage than of wisdom. From that day William became the friend and protector of Lanfranc, and the scholar more than repaid him for his patronage. Lanfranc's heart was with his books, however, and William had almost to force him to become Archbishop of Canterbury. The later life and work of the great scholar and statesman belong to English history. He lies buried in the cathedral of Canterbury, which he helped to build, and his work as a teacher and organiser of the Church was his best monument. Among his most famous scholars was Anselm, who afterwards occupied his seat as archbishop, and who braved the anger of William Rufus. There is a

remembrance of the Prior of Bec in Anselm's bold words to the Norman king, "Treat me as a free man," he said in a contest with his royal master, "and I devote myself and all that I have to your service, but if you treat me as a slave you shall have neither me nor mine."

The Beginnings of France.—The royal line of the Capets, then, began in weakness, but as time went on the French kings gathered strength. Little by little the great vassals became subject to the kings who came from the city which refused to bow to the Norsemen. In a very real sense Paris was the beginning of France, and from this centre the kingdom grew till its boundaries ran almost with those of the Gaul which Julius Cæsar conquered and ruled. Normandy, Toulouse, Gascony, Aquitaine, Angou, Burgundy, and Brittany each in turn became an integral part of the French kingdom, though not without many wars and tumults, much shedding of blood, and wasting of the "fair realm of France." Germans of Burgundy, Celts of Brittany, Norsemen of Normandy, were all welded into one people with the descendants of the Gallo-Romans or Romanised Gauls who held the land in Cæsar's day. The result was the modern France to which the civilised world owes more than can be readily set down.

CHAPTER VI—THE EMPEROR AND THE POPE

Henry IV. of Germany.—We come now to the time of a German king and Emperor of the Romans whose reign was memorable, not because of the greatness of the monarch, but to a great extent because of his weakness. This was Henry IV., the fifth in succession from Otto the Great. He was king in Germany during the time of our early Norman sovereigns, and his son Henry married Matilda, daughter of Henry I. of England.

Henry IV. was proclaimed king at the age of six, and until he came to manhood his mother, the Empress Agnes, was to be his guardian and to rule the kingdom of Germany in his name. She was a good woman with good intentions, but she was not equal to the heavy task of keeping in order the powerful German princes and nobles who were continually quarrelling amongst themselves. Among these vassals of the king were several bishops and archbishops who held great territories in various parts of the country, and were very powerful and wealthy; in fact, quite half the land and wealth of the kingdom was at that time in the hands of churchmen. Two of the most powerful were Anno, Archbishop of Cologne, and Adalbert, Archbishop of Bremen. The former was a stern, moody, and ambitious man, the latter easy, thriftless, fond of good living and gaiety. Between them they helped to wreck the character and life of a king who might perhaps have made his mark, by his merits, on the history of Europe.

Archbishop Anno wished to get the young king into

his hands and bring him up in his own way. This he was able to do by means of a stratagem. Henry was spending Whitsuntide with his mother on the island of Kaiserswerth in the Rhine. The archbishop determined to pay them a visit. He embarked with a retinue of attendants on a richly carved and decorated vessel, and set sail up the river from Cologne. The empress received him graciously and entertained him in a way suitable to his rank and dignity. After a splendid banquet the archbishop asked the boy king to go with him on board his vessel and examine it. Henry readily consented and was taken on board. At once the archbishop gave a signal and the ship was put out into mid-stream. The king saw that he was trapped and sprang overboard, but one of the archbishop's men leapt after him and brought him back to the vessel. The servants of the unhappy mother made an attempt to stop the archbishop's ship and rescue their young master, but they did not succeed. The sail was hoisted and the vessel sailed quickly down the Rhine to Cologne, while the empress stood on the shore of the island weeping and wringing her hands at the loss of her son.

The archbishop then got himself appointed as guardian to the king, and he proved a severe taskmaster. He kept the boy, who was only twelve years old, constantly at work on his studies, and allowed him little or no recreation. In less than a year the king was taken away and given into the charge of Adalbert of Bremen, who allowed Henry to do as he pleased and to waste his time in idle pleasures. There is little doubt that the severity of the one guardian and the carelessness of the other made Henry the passionate, fretful man that he afterwards became.

Henry had no sooner taken the government into his own hands than he was called upon to face a rebellion of the Saxons, whom we have seen more than once in revolt against the kingly power of Germany. Under the command of their Duke Otto, a great army of these warlike people marched on Goslar, where they besieged the king in his imperial castle. Henry managed to escape with great difficulty, and after a time was able to muster an army and march into Saxony. A terrible battle took place, the Saxons were beaten, and their land was laid waste with fire and sword. The king had triumphed and his throne seemed secure. But another struggle was at hand in which the unfortunate monarch was destined to be humbled to the dust.

Pope Gregory VII.—We have already spoken of the position taken by the popes of Rome with regard to the empire. In the time of Charlemagne the emperor was regarded as the temporal and the pope as the spiritual head of the world. Both were placed upon an equal footing, and were to rule the nations of the world between them. As the years went by and the popes of Rome gained greater power, their views of this arrangement began to change. And in the time of Henry IV. there arose a pope who put these changed views into very plain words. This was Gregory VII.

He was without doubt the greatest man of the age—a man with the mind of a statesman and of inflexible will. Writing in 1080 to William the Conqueror, he compares the power of the pope to the sun, and the power of a king, such as William himself, to the moon; then he goes on to claim that as the sun exceeds the moon in glory, so the power of the pope exceeds that of the king. At a later date he put this claim into more definite language.

"The popes of Rome," he writes, "are able on earth, according to the merits of each man, to give and take away empires, kingdoms, princedoms, marquises, duchies, countships, and the possessions of all men." So then, according to Gregory VII., the pope was supreme and the kings of the earth, including the emperor, were his servants.

This was not the view of the emperor and his supporters, as we shall see before long.

Henry IV. and Gregory VII.—Pope Gregory did not content himself with stating his claim. He acted upon it. We have seen how a large part of Germany was in the hands of churchmen, who were vassals of the king. When one of these men was appointed to his office he did homage to the monarch—that is, he knelt before him, placed his hands between those of the king, and promised to become his "man." Then the king gave to the new bishop or archbishop the ring and staff which were the signs or symbols of authority. If the monarch went to war the vassal was bound to support him by mustering and fitting out a body of troops drawn from the lands which he held in his lord's name.

When Henry IV. had been King of Germany for ten years there came to his court messengers from Rome. They claimed for their master, Pope Gregory, the right to grant the ring and staff to any newly-appointed bishop, and called upon Henry to give his consent to this new arrangement. The effect of it would be to create in Germany a number of powerful princes who were independent of any one but the pope. These men were often rebellious and lawless even when they had done homage to the king. It is not difficult to see what would have happened if they had been set free from all control except that of the Bishop of Rome.

As might have been expected, Henry angrily refused his assent to the pope's claim. He went further than this. A synod or council of his bishops was summoned to meet at Worms, where the pope was declared to be deposed. A message was then sent to Rome ordering the people of that city "to rise up against Gregory, that invader and oppressor of the Church, that plotter against the Roman republic and our realm," and to drive him from the city. But Gregory had not acted without support. "When the king's letters were read to the assembled clergy and nobles, and Roland, his ambassador, turning to them, coolly informed them that they were expected to present themselves before Henry before Whitsuntide and to receive from his hands a father and a pope, a bishop cried out with a loud voice, "Take him." Then the prefect, rushing forward sword in hand with the judges, knights, and nobles of Rome, would have slain the envoy there and then, but for the personal offices of Pope Gregory himself."

The pope's reply to Henry was to pronounce against him the sentence of excommunication. The effect of this was to cut off the king from all relations with his fellow-Christians. He was to be shunned by every one, and his vassals were told that their oaths of obedience were no longer binding.

Henry IV. at Canossa.—The king endeavoured to show a brave front under the pope's ban. He called a meeting of the German princes and tried to unite them in a national contest with the pope. But his efforts were unsuccessful. Many of the king's vassals were only too glad of an excuse to throw off their allegiance. These men were powerful enough to gain the upper hand. They held another council, at which Henry was not allowed to

be present, and they invited the pope to meet them at Augsburg in the following year. It was also their intention to elect Rudolph, Duke of Swabia, as king in Henry's place. The unfortunate monarch was seized with a panic of fear. He made up his mind to proceed at once to Italy and humbly beg for pardon from the pope.

The journey across the Alps was undertaken in the depth of a winter of unusual severity. Henry set out in secret, taking with him his wife Bertha, his little son, and one faithful knight. "They travelled," writes a historian, "over the Saint Bernard pass, and Bertha, whom neither danger nor distress could separate from her husband, was drawn over the ice seated on an ox-hide, whilst the king scrambled among the rocks like a chamois hunter."

Gregory was at that time staying at Canossa, a castled fortress near Reggio, belonging to a noble lady who was one of his most faithful and constant supporters. To this castle went King Henry to beg humbly that the pope should pardon him and restore him once more to his kingdom. Gregory did not yield too readily. The king was admitted alone into an inner court of the castle, and three days in succession he remained from morning till evening, dressed in a woollen shirt and with naked feet, while Gregory refused to admit him to his presence. On the fourth day of his humiliation he obtained pardon. He was commanded to present himself on a later day before the pope in order that the latter might decide whether or no he was to be restored to his kingdom. Till this was finally decided Henry was not to take upon himself the royal dignity.

Henry is crowned Emperor.—When Henry first appeared in Italy the Lombards of the north were ready to take

his part against Gregory, but after the humiliating spectacle in the courtyard of Canossa they refused to support him. In Germany the princes chose Rudolph as king, and civil war ensued, which for two years plunged the country into the deepest misery. Henry, however, was finally victorious, and he then prepared to avenge himself on Gregory. He marched into Italy with a large army and laid siege to Rome itself. The city held out for a long time, and only fell into the hands of the besiegers through the treachery of some of the Romans. Even then Gregory was able to defy the king in a strong fortress, whence he sent to Robert Guiscard an appeal for help. The Norman marched northward to Rome, and Henry was compelled to withdraw. Guiscard's army laid waste the city and then marched to Salerno, taking Gregory with them.

Henry appointed a new pope, who crowned him emperor in Saint Peter's; then he returned to Germany. The struggle with Gregory was ended, but the emperor's troubles seemed to have no end. The last years of his life were chiefly spent in quarrels with his two rebellious sons, who treated him shamefully, and at one time forced him to abdicate. He died at Liege in 1106, a broken-hearted man. Twenty years before, his great rival Gregory had passed away, an exile in Salerno.

The rivalry between the pope and the emperor is one of the leading facts of European history. It went on long after the time of Henry IV. and Gregory, and we must regard the struggle between them as typical of other great contests between later emperors and popes, and remember throughout that the policy of the Bishop of Rome always aimed at weakening the power of the Empire.

CHAPTER VII—KNIGHTHOOD AND
CHIVALRY

The Age of Chivalry.—We have all heard of the knights of the olden days, of their bravery in battle, their courtesy to ladies, and their defence of the oppressed; we can picture them in the tournament or on the battlefield, clad in strong armour and mounted on splendid chargers, winning renown by their daring and endurance, and by the might of their strong right arms.

They lived in what has been called the Age of Chivalry—that is, the age of the *chevaliers* or horsemen, for the knight was always a mounted warrior, and among the Germans was known as a “ritter” or rider. We may say that the Age of Chivalry extended from the eleventh to the fourteenth century—that is, roughly, from the time of the Norman Conquest to that of our Edward the Third. It saw the passing of the nations of Europe from barbarism and violence to civilisation and comparative respect for law and order.

The Page.—In the Age of Chivalry it was the ambition of every youth of noble birth to obtain the honour of knighthood. But before he could do this it was necessary that he should spend several years in attendance on some knight of renown. He had to become, in short, a servant, and gain by obedience the right and power to command. The boy was therefore sent at the age of twelve to the castle of some baron, where he became a page, and entered upon a long course of training, which was to fit him for the high position of

a knight. There he learnt to be obedient, modest, and courteous. He was taught to guide a horse and to use the bow, the sword, and the lance in such exercises as his boyish strength would permit. With the lance he tilted at the quintaine, a revolving figure holding an outstretched wooden sword, which, if the rider tilted clumsily, struck him a smart blow as he passed.

The page also attended his master when he went into the forest to hunt the deer. He learnt the different blasts on the horn, and, as the hunt often lasted for several days, he also became accustomed to bear hunger, thirst, and fatigue without complaint. In the baron's castle hall he waited at table, handing the dishes and wine-cup to his master, and sometimes carving the joints of meat. He was taught to show the deepest respect to the ladies of the household, and always to hold himself in readiness to serve them in every way he could. Thus we see how the page of the Age of Chivalry thought it "no shame to be seen among a chief's followers," however lofty his own family rank might be.

The Esquire.—At the age of fourteen or thereabouts the page became an esquire or squire, and though still an attendant or servant, he was expected to take part in exercises and sports of a more manly character. He also accompanied his master to the wars.

While residing at the castle of his lord during times of peace he was taught "to spring upon a horse while armed at all points; to exercise himself in running; to strike for a length of time with the axe or club; to dance and throw somersaults, entirely armed excepting the helmet; to mount on horseback behind one of his comrades by barely laying his hands on his sleeves; to raise himself between two partition walls to any height



THE VIGIL.—BY JOHN PETTIE, R.A.
(From the original painting in the Tate Gallery.)

by placing his back against the one and his knees and hands against the other; to mount a ladder placed against a tower upon the reverse or under side solely by the aid of his hands and without touching the rounds with his feet; to throw the javelin and pitch the bar."

The squire was also expected to make himself agreeable within the castle, to be able to sing and play some musical instrument, and often learnt to read the prose and poetical romances which formed almost the sole literature of the time. These told of the deeds of renowned knights, which the squire in his turn meant one day to emulate or even to excel. In the workshop of the castle armourer he learnt how to rivet the mail and chain armour—an accomplishment which often served him in good stead when engaged in actual warfare.

When the knight set out for war the squire attended him, carrying his shield and his helmet. It was the young man's duty to see that his lord's armour was kept well burnished, his weapons clean and fit for use, his charger well groomed and appointed. Before a battle he laced the knight's helmet, looked carefully to every part of his armour, placed his lance in rest, and girded on his sword. During the actual fighting he kept close to his master, assisting him in every way and taking charge of any prisoners of war.

Sometimes he took a share in the combat, and might even make prisoner some knight or squire whose ransom fell to the lot of his master. He was expected to show the greatest of courtesy to the prisoners who were given into his keeping, and to treat them with every respect, especially if they were knights. To these he was bound to show as much deference as he did to his own lord, and he attended upon them personally, doing for them

services which are now called menial. In this courteous treatment his master would not hesitate to set his squire an example. We may read in Froissart how the Black Prince bore himself towards King John of France, whom he had made prisoner. "The same day of the battle, at night, the prince made a supper in his lodging to the French king and to the most part of the great lords that were prisoners, . . . and always the prince served before the king as humbly as he could, and would not sit at the king's board for any desire that the king could make; but he said he was not worthy to sit at the table with so great a prince as the king was."

The time of preparation for knighthood came to an end when the squire had reached the age of twenty-one. Then he might claim the honour of knighthood, provided always that the record of his early years was blameless—that he had done nothing unworthy of the honour to which he aspired.

The Knight.—The making of a knight was a solemn ceremony, which was usually performed either on the field of battle or in a church. Every knight had at first the right to make other knights, but in time it became the custom for only the sovereign of a country to exercise the privilege. Certain of the clergy could also perform the ceremony. Thus we may read in Kingsley's *Hereward the Wake* how the Abbot of Peterborough knighted the Saxon patriot and two companions.

The chief part of the ceremony was the striking of the candidate on the neck with the flat of a sword. This light blow was called the "accolade," and without it no one could be made a knight. The manner of conferring knighthood varied in different countries, but the accolade was always bestowed.

In times of peace knighthood was usually conferred by the sovereign at his court, or while on a visit to the castle of one of his barons. The candidate prepared himself very carefully for the great event. He spent many hours in church or chapel praying with the monks or priests, and during the night before the ceremony he kept a lonely vigil. Before the altar he laid his armour and weapons, and he spent the long hours of the night in prayer beside them. When the morning came he put off the brown frock or robe of the squire, bathed himself, and was dressed by the monks in the garments and armour proper for a knight. They buckled on his spurs and belted him with his sword, and he then went forward bareheaded to the altar. Taking the sword from its sheath, he offered it to the priest, who laid it on the altar and prayed that it might be always used as a protection of the Church, of widows and orphans, of the poor and oppressed. The sword was then given back to the candidate, who now knelt before the king and swore to act always as a true knight should. The king then gave the accolade, and the candidate rose to his feet a belted knight.

In England the knight was addressed as Sir, in France as Messire. The ceremony of knighting was often followed by a grand tournament or jousts, in which the newly made knights took part.

On the field of battle the making of a knight was of necessity a more simple matter. It took place usually on the eve of a battle, but sometimes after a great victory. In the first case young warriors were made knights in order to stimulate them to deeds of valour during the coming combat, and if they distinguished themselves they were said to have "won their spurs." Thus the

Black Prince was knighted on landing at La Hogue by his father, Edward III., and afterwards "won his spurs" at the famous battle of Crecy. After a notable victory those who had displayed great valour during the fight were often knighted as a reward.

The candidate was brought to the leader of the force armed, but without his helmet, sword, and spurs. He knelt before his prince or general, while two knights, who acted as his sponsors,—that is, who recommended him for the honour,—buckled on his gilded spurs and belted him with his sword. The general then gave the accolade and said, "I dub thee knight in the name of God, St. Michael, and St. George. Be faithful, bold, and fortunate."

Sometimes the candidate chose the knight whom he wished to confer upon him the great honour. The Chevalier Bayard, "the knight without fear and without reproach," a noble Frenchman of the fifteenth century, was chosen by King Francis I. to confer the honour upon him. The king refused to be knighted by the hand of any but the renowned Bayard, who was the model of knightly valour and courtesy. The chevalier therefore gave the accolade to his sovereign, and was so sensible of the honour done to him that, it is said, he sheathed the sword he had used, and swore never to unsheath it again except in battle with Saracens, Moors, or Turks, the enemies of the Cross.

The Tournament.—The tournament is said to have had its beginning about the time of Henry the Fowler, who used this mimic battle to help in training his cavalry for the great struggle with the Huns. It was afterwards regulated by strict rules, and took a recognised place in the life of both knights and ladies of the Age of Chivalry.

A level space of ground was chosen, enclosed within

strong barriers or lists, and surrounded by wooden galleries for the spectators. Among those who watched the combats of the mail-clad warriors were many knights of established renown, and numbers of ladies, one of whom was chosen as the Queen of Love and Beauty, and crowned with a wreath of laurel the final victor in the lists.

Though, as a rule, the combatants carried weapons which were pointless and sometimes only of wood,—though they were bound by the laws of the game to strike only upon the strong armour of the trunk, or, as it was called, between the four limbs,—these conflicts often ended in serious wounds and death. Sir Walter Scott, after describing in *Ivanhoe* the mighty shock of two parties of opposing knights at a tournament, shows plainly how the mimic fight was in reality a serious thing.

“The splendid armour of the combatants was now defaced with dust and blood, and gave way at every stroke of the sword and battle-axe. The gay plumage, shorn from the crests, drifted upon the breeze like snow-flakes. All that was beautiful and graceful in the martial array had disappeared, and what was now visible was only calculated to awake terror or compassion.

“Yet such is the force of habit, that not only the vulgar spectators, who are naturally attracted by sights of horror, but even the ladies of distinction, who crowded the galleries, saw the conflict with a thrilling interest certainly, but without a wish to withdraw their eyes from a sight so terrible. Here and there, indeed, a fair cheek might turn pale, or a faint scream might be heard, as a lover, a brother, or a husband, was struck from his horse. But, in general, the ladies around encouraged the combatants, not only by clapping their hands and

waving their veils and kerchiefs, but even by exclaiming 'Brave lance! Good sword!' when any successful thrust or blow took place under their observation.

"Such being the interest taken by the fair sex in this bloody game, that of the men is the more easily understood. It showed itself in loud acclamations upon every change of fortune, while all eyes were so riveted on the lists that the spectators seemed as if they themselves had dealt and received the blows which were there so freely bestowed. And between every pause was heard the voice of the heralds, exclaiming, 'Fight on, brave knights! Man dies, but glory lives! Fight on, death is better than defeat! Fight on, brave knights! for bright eyes behold your deeds!'"

The Knight and the Lady.—It was not only in the tournament that the lady of the Age of Chivalry encouraged the knight to deeds of desperate valour. We have seen how from his earliest years the chevalier had been taught respect and reverence for women, and how he vowed when knighthood was conferred upon him to protect them with his good sword whenever occasion should arise. "All good knights," said a famous baron, "ought to aid to their powers all ladies and damsels chased out of their countries, being without counsel or comfort." And whenever a true knight heard of a lady in distress he was bound to hasten at once to her aid and to bring about her deliverance, or forfeit his life in making the attempt. The romances of the time tell of numberless feats of courage performed by brave knights on behalf of fair ladies, and give us many instances of women who were worthy of all the honour paid to them by the knights of the time. Thus we see that chivalry helped to make men gentler and more refined, chiefly because it

insisted on respect for women on the part of every true knight, whose motto was, "For God and the ladies."

The Decline of Chivalry. —We may place the end of the Age of Chivalry in the fifteenth century, when the outward forms and usages of which we have read fell gradually into disuse. Many causes worked together to bring about this result. As men became more civilised and life grew wider and fuller, they found other ways of spending their lives than in constant fighting for personal glory. There was also less need for their services on behalf of the wronged and oppressed, for the strong arm of the law was now better able to reach to the oppressor. With the introduction of gunpowder and artillery, methods of warfare were entirely changed, and the mail-clad knight was no longer the typical warrior of the time. Perhaps, too, it was with a sense of relief that the world saw the passing of the Age of Chivalry, for though knight-hood was good, it was not entirely good. There were many who were knightly in name but not in character. We read how "deeds that would disgrace a thief, and acts of cruelty that would have disgusted a tyrant of old, were common things with knights of the highest lineage." Nor did even the best of knights consider that he owed service or consideration to those beneath him in rank. The distressed maiden whom he went to rescue must be of high degree; he fought only with knights who were worthy of his steel; the deeds of chivalry had little or nothing to do with those who were not of gentle birth; the knight regarded the merchant and the serf as almost beneath contempt.

Yet though the outward form was debased and then passed away, the spirit of chivalry remained as an ennobling and elevating power.

The knight's bones are dust,
And his good sword rust,

“but he has left to us an imperishable and rich inheritance won for us by him. To him we owe our manners—all that world of existence implied in the names lady and gentleman.”

CHAPTER VIII—THE TIME OF THE CRUSADERS

The Eastern Crusades.—Every reader of English history knows something of the Crusades, those warlike expeditions in which the Christian warriors of the West strove to free the Holy Land from the power and presence of the infidel. These “holy wars,” as they were called, began in the latter part of the eleventh century, and ended with the third quarter of the thirteenth. They had their origin in France, but were afterwards joined by kings, princes, and knights from other European countries. A celebrated French historian calls them the “first European event,” because they united the warriors of all the western nations under one standard—the banner of the Cross. In them the knights of the Age of Chivalry had a new and worthy object for the exercise of that valour which had too often found its outlet in cruel private wars and useless search for adventure.

We saw in a previous chapter how the Holy Land became a possession of the Saracens, and under Haroun al Raschid formed part of the Eastern Caliphate. This prince did not deny to Christians the privilege of visiting the holy places in and near Jerusalem, and many of his

successors followed his example in this respect. But in the eleventh century the Saracens of the East were overcome by the Turks, a warlike people, who came from the central part of Asia and fixed their capital at Nicea in Asia Minor, almost opposite to Constantinople. They adopted the Mohammedan religion, and their rulers or sultans called themselves caliphs, or successors of the prophet. The Christian pilgrims from the West now found that they were forbidden entry to the holy places by the new masters of Palestine. Many of them also suffered cruelly at the hands of the Turks. Accounts of these persecutions travelled westward, and gradually prepared the minds of the people of Western Europe for the great movement which led to the First Crusade.

Peter the Hermit.—The man who did most to rouse the West to action in defence of the Holy Sepulchre was Peter the Hermit, a native of Picardy in France, who had been a soldier in his younger days. He made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and saw with his own eyes how the Christians were treated by the Turks. Filled with wrath against the “unbelieving hounds,” he vowed to make his way through every part of Western Europe and rouse the nations to a holy war.

“The Hermit traversed Italy, crossed the Alps, went from province to province, from city to city. His appearance commanded attention, his austerity respect, his language sympathy. He rode on a mule, with a crucifix in his hand, his head and feet bare; his dress was a long robe girt with a cord, and a hermit’s cloak of the coarsest stuff. He preached in the pulpits, in the roads, in the market-places. His eloquence was that which stirs the heart of the people, for it came from his own; it was mingled with his own tears, his own groans; he beat his

breast; the contagion spread throughout his audience. His preaching appealed to every feeling, to valour and shame, to indignation and pity, to the pride of the warrior, the compassion of the man, the religion of the Christian, to the love of the brethren, to the hatred of the unbeliever, to reverence for the Redeemer."

The impassioned preacher was regarded as a messenger from heaven itself. It required only the sanction of the Church to complete his work, and this was given at a council held at Clermont, in France, which was attended by princes, nobles, archbishops, and bishops from every part of the country. When Peter had addressed the assembled nobles, and had moved them to tears and deep anger by his eloquence, the pope arose and added his voice to the cry for vengeance against the infidels. He too was an eloquent man, and he knew well how to stir the hearts and rouse the feelings of his hearers.

"From the borders of Jerusalem," he cried, "a tale of horror has gone forth and has been borne to our ears. A race from the country of the Persians—a race accursed, a race which know not God—has invaded the lands of these Christians and laid them waste with fire and sword. They have either destroyed the churches of God or used them for their own purposes. . . . This royal city, situated at the centre of the earth, is now held captive by the enemies of Christ, and is subjected to the worship of the infidel, who knows not God."

Then he appealed to the men before him, the "race of Franks chosen and beloved of God," to remember the glory and greatness of Charlemagne and his invincible warriors, and, fired by that memory, to beat back the pagan from the most sacred of all the lands of the earth. God had given them brave hearts, strength of body, and

honour in arms above other nations. Let them use these gifts in His service.

The pope's appeal achieved its purpose. Rising with one consent, the assembled nobles unsheathed their swords and loudly cried, "It is the will of God! It is the will of God!" The pope seized upon the words and gave them back to the warriors as a battle-cry against the heathen. And he bade those who were willing to fight for the Cross to wear the sacred symbol on back and breast, as an outward token of the service in which they had enlisted.

From the council at Clermont the enthusiasm spread far and wide through the land of France and beyond its borders. People of all degrees, princes and barons, bishops and priests, monks and hermits, husbandmen and men-at-arms, made ready to join the First Crusade. "Europe appeared," writes a historian, "to be a land of exile which every one was eager to quit." Many of the nobles sold their lands to obtain money for the equipment of a body of fighting men. Some gave charters to the towns within their borders in return for the gold of the merchants; in this way numbers of towns gained certain rights of self-government which in many cases were afterwards increased—a fact worth noting at this point and remembering.

Godfrey de Bouillon.—The first properly organised crusade now set out for the East. The expedition numbered about 700,000 warriors, a large proportion of whom were knights. Most of the rank and file and all the leaders were French, and chief of the enterprise was a famous knight named Godfrey de Bouillon. He was Duke of Lower Lorraine, and claimed descent from Charlemagne. No better leader could possibly have been

selected. "His prowess in fight and his extraordinary strength of body made him the pride of camps. . . . Faithful to his word, liberal, affable, full of humanity, the princes and knights looked upon him as their model, the soldiers as their father—all were eager to fight under his standard."

Under Godfrey's leadership the great army of Christian warriors reached Constantinople, crossed the Bosphorus, and laid siege to Antioch. The city held out for some time and severely tested the endurance of the besiegers, whose supplies of food ran short. "They had never learned," writes a chronicler, "to endure such plaguy hunger." A number of the Crusaders deserted, and among them Peter the Hermit. "This," adds the chronicler, "did not astonish them less than if the stars had fallen from heaven"; which we can well believe. The deserters were brought back to the camp, and before long the city fell into the hands of the besiegers.

Then Godfrey directed his force towards Jerusalem, which had recently been retaken from the Turks by the Saracens of Egypt. The Crusaders were deeply moved when they caught sight of the towers and walls of the Holy City in the dawn of a summer morning. The joyful cry of "Jerusalem! Jerusalem!" ran through their ranks. Tears of joy rose to the eyes and ran down the cheeks of stern warriors who beheld at length the goal of their warlike pilgrimage. Many fell on their knees and thanked God that they had been permitted to behold the city of their hopes. Then they pressed onward to the work of conquest. For the space of about four weeks they besieged the city, and performed many deeds of prowess before its walls. At last they were able to effect an entry, and the Mohammedans were slaughtered

without mercy. Even women and children were not spared in that mad massacre of the "heathen hounds." For work of this kind, we must remember, the Crusader would take credit to himself.

Godfrey of Bouillon was chosen King of Jerusalem, but he refused the royal title. "I cannot wear a crown of gold," he said, "in the place where the Saviour of the World was crowned with thorns." He therefore took the title of "Defender and Baron of the Holy Sepulchre," but he was practically the first sovereign of what came to be known as the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem.

The capture of the Holy City was regarded by many of the Crusaders as the end of their work, and large numbers of them returned to their homes. To maintain the conquest which had been made, a comparatively small number was left. But under the leadership of Godfrey those few performed many feats of valour, which caused the Saracens to regard them almost as superhuman beings. Over and over again large bodies of Mohammedans were beaten back by the champions of the Holy Sepulchre, who were "armed by faith within and steel without," and who fought always with a certainty of victory—strong in the assurance that heaven was upon their side.

Stories of the prowess of Godfrey were numerous, and served to while away a weary hour by the camp fires at night. While the Crusaders were besieging a certain town several emirs or Arabian princes came to visit the guardian of the Holy Sepulchre. They were filled with amazement when they found the renowned warrior without a guard, without any of the outward signs of royalty, asleep in a bed of straw like the humblest of his foot soldiers. At their request he gave them an exhibition of

his strength by cutting off the head of a camel with one blow of his sword. The Arabs thought that the blade was enchanted, and asked him to do the same with a sword which they offered. Godfrey obliged them by cutting off the head of another camel, and the Arabs returned to their tents and their people to relate the wonders they had seen.

Such a tale, doubtless, pleased the warriors of the time, who would lose sight of what we should call wanton cruelty in admiration of physical strength. For the first Crusaders were, after all, little better than barbarians, as is shown by many of their acts of cruel vengeance upon the Mohammedans. Nor did a sense of the sacredness of their charge and their mission prevent them from quarrelling amongst themselves. Godfrey had some difficulty in restraining them and uniting them against the common enemy. When he died the Turks found the defenders of the Holy Sepulchre much less formidable. They were able to take Edessa, a city which formed the eastern bulwark of the Latin kingdom. The people of the West heard this news with alarm, and once more sprang to arms in defence of the Holy City, which seemed to be threatened by the forces of the infidel.

Saint Bernard.—The origin of the Second Crusade was similar to that of the first. An eloquent monk named Bernard played the part of Peter the Hermit, and helped to rouse the people of the West to a pitch of enthusiasm quite as strong as had been shown forty years before.

Bernard was abbot of a monastery at Clairvaux, in France, which was famous for its learned men. At a great assembly near a little Burgundy town he called upon the knights and nobles to forsake their continual private wars and to turn their swords not against their

fellow-Christians but against the infidels. "Christian warriors," he cried, "these are combats worthy of you—combats in which it is glorious to conquer and advantageous to die. Illustrious knights, generous defenders of the Cross, remember the example of your fathers who conquered Jerusalem, and whose names are inscribed in heaven; abandon then the things that perish to gather eternal palms and conquer a kingdom which has no end."

Once more the whole company was roused to a frenzy of excitement. Once more the cry arose, "It is the will of God! It is the will of God! The Cross! The Cross!" The knights pressed forward to receive the sacred symbol from the hands of the abbot. The supply of crosses was not sufficient for all who claimed them, and Bernard tore his vestments to make more. Then the knights departed to muster their followers and make ready for the journey. Hundreds of thousands flocked to their banners. "The villages and castles are deserted," wrote Bernard to the pope when the great host had set out, "and there are none left but widows and orphans, whose husbands and parents are still living."

In the ranks of the second crusading army were to be found knights and soldiers from every part of Western Europe. The expedition was divided into two portions. That which mustered in France was under the command of the French king, Louis VII., who took with him his queen, Eleanor, and a number of high-born ladies of his court who did not shrink from the dangers and terrors of war. The other division of the army was under the leadership of the Emperor Conrad III., and mustered in Germany.

The Crusaders never reached the Holy City. They

crossed the Bosphorus after several disputes with the Eastern emperor, who treacherously placed every obstacle in the way of the warriors who had come to fight the battles in which he also ought to have engaged in the name of the Christian faith. In Asia Minor both divisions of the army met with disaster. The Emperor Conrad's force was led astray by the guides from Constantinople and almost cut to pieces by the Turks. The French army was surprised in the mountainous regions north of Syria, and only a portion escaped by sea to the Holy Land. Before Damascus they were joined by the remnant of the German division, and after an attempt to take this city the Crusaders left Palestine, beaten and discomfited. Fifty years elapsed before a third crusade was organised after the capture of Jerusalem in 1187 by Saladin, the Saracen ruler of Egypt.

The Third and Fourth Crusades.—Three kings of Western Europe took part in the Third Crusade—the Emperor Frederick I., Philip II. of France, and Richard I. of England.

The Emperor Frederick was surnamed Barbarossa on account of the red colour of his beard. He spent a life of continual warfare, and is remembered as one of the heroes of German history—an outstanding figure like Charlemagne, Henry the Fowler, and Otto the Great. Most of his campaigns were conducted in Italy, where on more than one occasion he suffered reverses and personally endured great hardships. At one time he was forced to disguise himself as a common soldier, and, with a few companions, to make his way home on foot. The little party remained hidden in the Alps for some months, the emperor sharing all the hardships of his followers. Finally, however, Frederick reached Germany,

to be gladly welcomed by his own people. On another occasion he was seen to fall from his horse during a battle. For some days it was believed that he was dead; but suddenly he appeared to his wife in an Italian town, having escaped in disguise from his enemies.

When the Third Crusade was organised, after the fall of Jerusalem before the Sultan Saladin, Frederick Barbarossa was one of the first European princes to muster his forces, which met at Ratisbon and marched towards Constantinople. The emperor left his son, Henry, to rule in his stead, and when on the march he received a false message to the effect that Henry was dead. The tears ran down his beard, no longer red but silver-white; then, turning to the army, he cried, "My son is dead, but Christ lives!"¹ Forward!"

While crossing a river in Asia Minor, Frederick was either drowned or caught a fatal chill from the effects of immersion in the ice-cold waters. By what means he came to his death is not certain, and the mystery surrounding the occurrence helped to foster the popular idea, which took root in the minds of the German peasantry, that Frederick was not dead, but would once more reappear when Germany was most in need of his powerful arm. Carlyle writes of him:—

"German tradition thinks he is not dead, but only sleeping till the world reaches its worst, when he will reappear. He sits within the hill near Salzburg yonder, says German tradition, its fancy kindled by strange noises in that limestone hill from hidden waters, and by the grand rocky look of the place.

"A peasant once, stumbling into the interior, saw the

¹ The Crusaders' war-cries were "Christ lives!" "The Cross!" and "It is the will of God!"

kaiser in his stone cavern; kaiser sat at a marble table leaning on his elbow; winking, only half asleep; beard had grown through the table and streamed out on the floor. He looked at the peasant one moment, asked him something about the time, then drooped his eyelids again. Not yet time, but will be soon! He is winking as if to awake. To awake and set his shield aloft again with 'Ho, every one that is suffering wrong, or that has strayed guideless and done wrong, which is yet more fatal.'"

English history tells us of the great deeds done by Richard Cœur de Lion, who took a prominent part in the Third Crusade. With Philip Augustus of France he set out for the Holy Land by sea, while Frederick Barbarossa was marching by land towards the Bosphorus. The English and French forces captured the town of Acre after a long and costly siege. Then the two monarchs quarrelled, and Philip returned to France, leaving Richard to advance upon Jerusalem without his aid.

The struggle between *Cœur de Lion* and Saladin, the courteous and knightly leader of the Mohammedans, for the possession of the Holy Sepulchre lasted for nearly three years, and ended in a truce, which gave to the Christians admission to the holy places in the city, and left to them their conquests on the coast of Palestine. During this Crusade the knights of the West learnt to respect the Saracen warriors, and ceased to look upon them as savages or barbarians fit only to be slaughtered without mercy. We may read in Sir Walter Scott's *Talisman* the story of Richard's dealings with Saladin, who was excelled by no Christian knight in valour and courtesy.

The ~~Fourth~~ Crusade ended not in the capture of Jerusalem but of Constantinople. When the Crusaders reached Constantinople they found the Eastern Emperor engaged in endeavouring to suppress a revolt of his subjects. They lent him their aid, restored him to his throne, and when he fell a victim to a conspiracy they took possession of the city and crowned one of their leaders Baldwin, Count of Flanders, as Emperor of the East.

The Emperor Frederick II., grandson of Barbarossa, set out on the Sixth Crusade in order to fulfil a promise he had made to the pope to make war on the infidels of the East. In 1228 he led an enormous army into Palestine and concluded a treaty with the Sultan of Egypt, by which he gained possession of Jerusalem, Nazareth, and Bethlehem, but for ten years only. He had married the daughter of the last Latin king of Jerusalem, and claiming to be his heir, he had himself proclaimed King of the Holy City. Then he returned to Italy to engage in a long and fierce struggle with the popes of Rome, who were pursuing their usual policy of hostility towards the head of the Holy Roman Empire. But the Emperor Frederick was very powerful, and Innocent IV. was forced to flee to France, whence he sent out a decree excommunicating and deposing the emperor. "Has the pope deposed me?" asked the emperor. "Bring me my crowns that I may see of what he has deprived me." Then his crowns were brought, seven in number, the imperial diadem, the royal crown of Germany, the iron crown of the Lombards, the crowns of Sicily, Sardinia, and Burgundy, and the crown which he had won in the Sixth Crusade. "I have them still," he said, "and no one shall wrest them from me." But the struggle with Rome embittered the life and used up

the energy of this brave and enlightened monarch, who, had he worn but one crown, that of Germany, might perhaps have united the people of the various states into one strong and compact nation.

Saint Louis of France.—One of the last Crusading leaders was Louis IX. of France, who, according to a historian, was “the most eminent pattern of unswerving probity and Christian strictness of conscience that ever held the sceptre in any country.” Louis had a good mother, who seems to have always kept before him a high ideal. “Know, my son,” she would tell him repeatedly, “that though I am devoted to you with a mother’s love, I should prefer to see you dead than guilty of grievous sin.” The lessons of his youth were remembered in after years to the advantage of the kingdom over which he was called to rule. Like our Alfred, the French king was in very truth “the father of his people,” and in him the poor and oppressed found a true friend and helper.

It was during a severe illness that King Louis vowed to set out on a Crusade should he be restored to health. When he had recovered he organised the ~~Seventh~~ Crusade, sailed for Egypt, took Damietta, and advanced on Cairo. He was, however, defeated by the Sultan’s forces, became a prisoner, and was only released after paying a heavy ransom, and restoring Damietta, to the Sultan of Egypt. Twenty years later Louis set out on the ~~Eighth~~ Crusade, but died on the way. With this last expedition went Prince Edward of England, afterwards Edward I., who reached the Holy Land, captured Nazareth, and concluded with the Sultan of Egypt a treaty which gave several advantages to the Christians. The prince was accompanied by his wife, who afterwards became Queen Eleanor, and who on this campaign is said to have saved

her husband's life by sucking the poison from a wound inflicted by an assassin's dagger.

This was the last of the Crusades. In 1291 Jerusalem fell once more into the hands of the Turks, and "silence reigned along the shore that had so long resounded with the world's debate."

The Troubadours and Minnesingers.—In the time of the Crusades lived the poets of Provence, in Southern France, who are known as the *troubadours* or singers. Many of them led a wandering life, passing from town to town and castle to castle, reciting or singing their verses whenever they could obtain a hearing. Some attached themselves to the households of great barons and lived in their castles. As a rule they composed the melody as well as the poem itself, but sometimes they were helped by the professional jongleurs or minstrels in setting their verses to music. Their most flourishing period was the time of the Third Crusade, and *Cœur de Lion* is said to have been an amateur troubadour. While in prison in Germany he composed a poem which he sent to his favourite sister Joan. The first verse ran—

Never can captive make a song so fair
As he can make that has no cause for care,
Yet may he strive by song his grief to cheer.
I lack not friends, but sadly lack their gold.
Shamed are they, if unransomed I lie here,
A second Yule in hold.

Then the royal captive goes on to upbraid his friends for their delay in providing his ransom. *He* would not leave his friends in chains to save his gold. Remorse will seize them when they come to die if they do not come to the rescue. If King Philip of France were true to all his promises the singer would not long

languish in prison, but would soon be released. Thus it is said the Lion Heart helped to while away the hours of his captivity.

The *Minnesingers* might be called the troubadours of Germany. They lived too in the Age of Chivalry, and were most flourishing at the time of the earlier Crusades. One of the best known was Walther von der Vogelweide, *i.e.* Walter of the Bird-Meadow, about whom Longfellow writes :—

Vogelweid the Minnesinger,
When he left this world of ours,
Laid his body in the cloister,
Under Würtzburg's minster towers.

And he gave the monks his treasures,
Gave them all with this behest :
They should feed the birds at noontide
Daily on his place of rest ;

Saying, "From these wandering minstrels
I have learned the art of song ;
Let me now repay the lessons
They have taught so well and long."

The poem goes on to tell how the birds were fed daily by the children of the choir till many years afterwards the Abbot of Würtzburg ordered the bread to be kept for the monks of the monastery.

Then in vain, with cries discordant,
Clamorous round the Gothic spire,
Screamed the feathered Minnesingers
For the children of the choir.

Results of the Crusades.—As far as their first object was concerned the Crusades were not successful, for when they were over, the Holy City still remained in the hands of the infidel. But the people of the Western nations

gained greatly from these expeditions. Many of the knights forgot their private quarrels in zeal for a common cause. Their absence from their own lands allowed the arts of peace to flourish as they had not done before. Trade and commerce increased in France, Germany, and Italy, and wealthy cities sprang up, some of which, as we have seen, used a portion of their riches to purchase charters of liberty from the princes and barons within whose borders they lay.

The returning Crusaders brought back not only wonderful travellers' tales of Eastern lands, but valuable knowledge of the people and countries through which they had passed. This helped to broaden the minds of the people of the West, whose knowledge of geography and of the manners and customs of other nations had hitherto been of a very scanty nature. The Western warriors, moreover, learnt not only to respect the valour of their enemies with whom they fought, but also found that the Saracens were not the savage barbarians they had imagined them to be. Even the best of the knights of the Age of Chivalry could not outdo the courtesy of Saladin and his warriors. This came as a surprise to many of the Crusaders, and it taught them a wholesome lesson.

CHAPTER IX—THE ADVANCE OF FRANCE

The States-General of France.—About fifty years after the reign of Louis IX. of France, Philip the Fair was engaged in a struggle with the pope, and called to his council of clergy and nobles citizens from the free towns of France, which were rapidly growing in wealth and influence. The assembly thus summoned was known as the States-General, because it was composed of the three chief estates of the realm, the clergy, nobility, and commons, and it met in the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris. The occasion is important because it was the beginning of what we might call a French House of Commons, and the new assembly resembles in some degree the famous Parliament summoned in 1265 by Simon de Montfort. But while in England the Parliament, and especially the Lower House, gradually grew more and more powerful, in France the States-General was not often called together, and took only a small part in the history of the nation. The kings of France were afraid of it, and during the five hundred years following its foundation it met only thirteen times. In the end the States-General did gain the supreme power, as we shall see in a later chapter, and did so in a sudden and terrible manner.

The assembly called by Philip supported the king in his contest with the pope. "Thou art subject to us in all matters," Pope Boniface had written to the French king. "We are subject to no man in political matters," was the answer, and the States-General declared that neither the nobles nor commons of France wanted the

pope to interfere in things which concerned only themselves and the king. So we find the States-General standing at its foundation for national independence. In after years it exercised some slight control over the kings of France, and during years of oppression and tyranny helped somewhat to keep people from despair.

The Hundred Years' War.—During the century following the year 1337 France was engaged in a great struggle with England, known as the Hundred Years' War. This contest was not a continuous war, for fighting was not going on during the whole time, but for a little over a century there was no lasting peace between the two countries. The war began in the reign of our Edward the Third, who laid claim to the throne of France through his mother, a sister of the French king, Charles IV., who had died in 1328. The French refused to acknowledge this claim, and chose Philip of Valois, grandson of a brother of that Philip who quarrelled with the pope and summoned the citizens to the States-General. Philip of Valois reigned nearly ten years before the fighting began, and it was only when he attacked the French possessions of the English king that the latter crossed the Channel to begin the great war.

It was a heroic time in our history this Hundred Years' War, the time of Crecy, Poitiers, and Agincourt, of Edward III., the Black Prince, Sir Walter Manny, Sir John Chandos, and Henry V. When we think of these great names we are apt to imagine that the issue of the struggle was to England. But it was not so. When the century of strife began the English kings held great possessions in France; when it ended they held only the town of Calais. And on the French side we find heroes in the fight as brave and knightly as those whose deeds



THE MAID OF ORLEANS RECEIVING THE CONSECRATED BANNER.—R. WESTALL.

adorn the pages of our own history. Moreover, the struggle had the effect of hastening the closer union of the various portions of the kingdom of France. "Before the war," writes a historian, "each man was a citizen of a particular city and nothing more; but brought face to face with the English, the sentiment of nationality was aroused, and henceforth each felt himself a Frenchman, or citizen of France." Let us try to look at a few of the incidents in the great struggle with the object of finding out what was heroic and worthy of admiration on the side opposed to our own country.

The Blind King of Bohemia.—At the battle of Crecy King Philip was assisted by a body of German knights under the blind King John of Bohemia and his son Charles. The latter had recently been chosen emperor by the pope, and had come to seek the help of the French king in securing the crown of Germany; for the German people had refused to recognise the right of the pope to choose a ruler for them.

"The valiant King of Bohemia," writes one of the chroniclers of the war, "having heard the order for the battle, inquired where his son, the Lord Charles, was; his attendants answered that they did not know, but believed he was fighting. Upon this he said to them, 'Gentlemen, you are all my people, my friends and brethren at arms this day; therefore, as I am blind, I request of you to lead me so far into the engagement that I may strike one stroke with my sword.' The knights consented, and in order that they might not lose him in the crowd, fastened all the reins of their horses together, placing the king at their head that he might gratify his wish, and in this manner advanced towards the enemy. . . . The king rode in among the enemy, and he and his companions

fought most valiantly; however, they advanced so far that they were all slain, and on the morrow they were found on the ground with all their horses tied together."

The Battle of Poitiers—The Jacquerie.—At Poitiers, where the Black Prince won the famous victory of 1356, the French were led by King John, who had succeeded Philip six years before. "King John, on his part," says the chronicler, "proved himself a good knight; indeed, if the fourth of his people had behaved so well, the day would have been his own"; and throughout the chronicler's account of the fight great credit is given to the French king and his faithful few, who refused to turn their backs upon the enemy when the rest of the army had fled towards the city of Poitiers. The last scene is thus described:—

"During the whole engagement the Lord de Chargny, who was near the king, and carried the royal banner, fought most bravely. The English and Gascons, however, poured so fast upon the king's division, that they broke through the ranks by force, and in the confusion the Lord de Chargny was slain, with the banner of France in his hand. There was now much eagerness manifested to take the king; and those who were nearest to him, and knew him, cried out, 'Surrender yourself, surrender yourself, or you are a dead man.' In this part of the field was a young knight from St. Omer, engaged in the service of the King of England, whose name was Denys de Morbeque; for three years he had attached himself to the English, on account of having been banished from France in his younger days for a murder committed during an affray at St. Omer. Now it fortunately happened for this knight that he was at the time near to the King of France, to whom he said in good French, 'Sire, sire,

surrender yourself.' The king, who found himself very disagreeably situated, turning to him, asked, 'To whom shall I surrender myself? Where is my cousin, the Prince of Wales? If I could see him I would speak to him.' 'Sire,' replied Sir Denys, 'he is not here; but surrender yourself to me, and I will lead you to him.' 'Who are you?' said the king. 'Sire, I am Denys de Morbeque, a knight from Artois; but I serve the King of England because I cannot belong to France, having forfeited all I possessed there.' The king then gave him his right-hand glove, and said 'I surrender myself to you.'"

King John was afterwards conducted to the Black Prince, who, as we know, treated the royal captive with deference and knightly courtesy. He was taken to London, where he died not long afterwards.

Before the battle of Poitiers King John had vowed to wipe out the shame of the defeat of Crécy, which rankled in the minds of the French. But the victory of the Prince of Wales only doubled the disgrace, and to the dissatisfaction at the defeat we may partly trace the fierce outbreak of the French peasants against their rulers, which broke out in 1357, and which was known as the Jacquerie.¹ Large bands of these people rose in rebellion in Central France, put to death every one not belonging to their own order upon whom they could lay their hands, burnt castles and manor-houses, and sacked towns and villages. They were suppressed with great difficulty, and hundreds of them were slaughtered without mercy. It was a time of the deepest misery for France, and

¹ The name Jacques (James) is one of the commonest among the French country people, and the typical peasant is often nicknamed Jacques Bonhomme, *i.e.* James Good-fellow.

before long the leaders were ready to grant whatever conditions the English might choose to impose. Peace was concluded by the Treaty of Bretigny and France obtained breathing time.

Sir Bertrand du Guesclin.—Among the Frenchmen of the time none was braver or more renowned than Sir Bertrand du Guesclin, a knight of Brittany. He began his career as the captain of a free company, and one of his first exploits was to drive the cruel King of Castile, Don Pedro, from his kingdom and give to the Castilians a king who would rule them with justice and humanity. This new king was afterwards defeated by the Black Prince, who had taken the part of Don Pedro. In this campaign Sir Bertrand du Guesclin was taken prisoner.

“Now it happened that one day, while the Black Prince was at Bordeaux, he called Sir Bertrand to him and asked how he was. ‘My Lord,’ he replied, ‘I never was better. Indeed, I cannot be otherwise than well, for I am, though in prison, the most honoured knight in the world.’ ‘How so?’ rejoined the prince. ‘Why, they say in France,’ answered Sir Bertrand, ‘that you are so much afraid of me that you dare not set me free, and for this reason I think myself so much valued and honoured.’ ‘What, Sir Bertrand!’ said the prince, ‘do you imagine that we keep you a prisoner for fear of your prowess? By Saint George! it is not so; for, my good sir, if you will pay me one hundred thousand francs you shall be free at once.’ Sir Bertrand was anxious for liberty, and by this scheme obtained it, for in less than a month the money was provided by the King of France.” Which shows that Sir Bertrand had a shrewd and ready wit as well as a courageous heart.

In time Du Guesclin was advanced to be Constable

of France, holding chief command of the forces. In this capacity he conducted more than one vigorous campaign against the English, and drove them out of several parts of France. He died while laying siege to a castle in Languedoc. When the place fell before the French the English leader is said to have asked his conquerors for permission to place the keys of the castle in the hands of the dead Constable, so great was the fame of this brave Frenchman, and so high the honour in which he was held alike by friend and foe.

Burgundians and Armagnacs.—Before long France and England were once more at war, and under Charles V. the French were able to gain considerable advantage. But in the reign of his son, Charles VI., civil war added its horrors to those of the struggle with England. The king was a boy of twelve when his father died, and during his youth Philip, Duke of Burgundy, became the most powerful noble in France. Opposed to him were the friends of the queen, who were known as the Armagnacs, a name derived from the title of one of the leading men of the faction. So strong was the feeling between the two parties that each side was even prepared to sacrifice their country to crush the other. England was now governed by Henry V., and both Burgundians and Armagnacs appealed to him for assistance. This led to the expedition of King Henry, to which belongs the memory of Agincourt, and which ended in the Treaty of Troyes. By this arrangement Henry V. was to become King of France on the death of Charles VI., who was now insane, and on the death of the English king his son, Henry VI., was crowned King of France in Paris. His rival was the Dauphin Charles, who took refuge in the city of Bourges and called himself Charles the Seventh.

Joan, the Maid of Orleans.—The fortunes of France were at their lowest ebb when deliverance arose from an unexpected quarter. There was living in the village of Domrémy a simple peasant girl named Joan. She was quiet and retiring, loving the solitude of the forest near her home, where she took long walks, musing on the miseries of her beloved country. Before long, as she afterwards maintained, she began to see visions, and to hear heavenly voices which bade her rise and deliver "the fair realm of France" from the presence of the enemy. She was bidden, as she said, to raise the siege of Orleans, which had been lately invested by the English, and to establish Charles VII., her rightful sovereign, upon the throne of his ancestors. When she made these things known she met with ridicule and opposition, as was to be expected. Her father declared that he would kill her with his own hand rather than consent to her setting out on such a mad errand. But the girl was steadfast. "I must go to the king," she said, "even if I wear my limbs to the very knees. I would rather rest and spin by my mother's side, for this is no work of my choosing; but I must go and do it, for my Lord wills it."

Finally she was sent to the neighbouring town, the commandant of which, after vainly trying to turn her from her purpose, sent her to the dauphin. "My brothers of Paradise tell me to go," she said to those who scoffed at her project; and when she reached the dauphin's court it is said that she knew the prince, although he was dressed exactly like those about him. "In God's name it is you and none other," she said. "Gentle dauphin, I am Jeanne the Maid. The heavenly King sends me to tell you that you shall be anointed

and crowned in Rheims, and you shall be lieutenant of the heavenly King, who is the King of France." The girl was examined and questioned several times, and steadfastly kept to her first statements. "There is no more need of words," she said at last; "this is not the hour to talk, but to act." At last she was given a command; and this "simple shepherdess" rode forth "as a warrior on a great war-horse, dressed all in white armour, save her head, which was bare, and with an axe in hand." She carried a consecrated banner, and a sword marked with five crosses, which, it is said, was never stained with blood, for the Maid had a womanly horror of bloodshed, and for this reason was her own standard-bearer. "I ever carried that banner myself," she said, "when attacking the enemy, for fear lest I should slay any man."

To the English before Orleans the Maid sent a messenger bidding them begone, or she would "come and make them go." She kept her word, for in eight days the siege was raised, and the peasant girl of Domrémy had won herself an everlasting name.

Then the dauphin was conducted by the victorious Maid across a country dotted with English camps to Rheims, and there received the crown and sceptre, which he could never have won except for the heroic efforts of the devoted and unselfish girl who stood near him, the royal banner in her hand, during his coronation. After this ceremony Joan would have left the king's court, now that her work was accomplished, for she longed for the peace and quiet of her native village, far from the rude and vicious life of the French soldiery. "Would it were God's pleasure," she said, "that I might go and keep sheep once more with my sisters and my brothers; they would be so glad to see me again." But Charles would

not permit her to go away; and she was afterwards engaged in further contest with the English, who believed her to be a witch, and thought that her victories were due to sorcery. Finally the heroic girl was captured by the Burgundians, and sold by their duke to his English allies for 10,000 francs. She was tried at Rouen for witchcraft, and condemned to die by fire in the public square of the city. She met her death bravely, as became one of her heroic spirit. "Yes, my voices were of God!" she exclaimed as the flames wrapped her round. "They have never deceived me." Charles, to his lasting shame, made no effort to rescue the maiden to whom he owed his kingdom. He was weak and indecisive, and the contending parties in his kingdom had little sympathy for the pure, whole-hearted patriotism of the Maid of Orleans. "The noble figure of the heroine of France stands out in amazing beauty against the background of treachery, meanness, cruelty, and smoke of devouring fire. In all she is lifted far above her countrymen and her age; in all she is perfect in her simplicity, piety, self-devotion. She stands alone in the page of history."

"We are lost," muttered an English soldier as he watched the flames roll up round the martyr of Rouen; "we have burned a saint." The cause of England was indeed lost, for the influence of the martyred girl lived on, and stirred the French to united action. Before long only Calais remained to the English. The important province of Aquitaine in Southern France became part of the kingdom, and from the time of the Maid of Orleans we may date the beginning of the modern kingdom of France.

CHAPTER X—THE SWISS CONFEDERATION AND THE HANSA

“The Pursuit of a Glittering Toy.”—We have marked the advance of France towards national unity, and seen how she emerged crippled but victorious from the Hundred Years’ War, ready to take a foremost place among the nations of Europe. The issue of this great struggle was also an advantage to England, now free to develop in her own way. Germany, however, was not so happy. She was still yoked with Italy, and her kings still claimed the visionary world-lordship which underlay the idea of the Holy Roman Empire. “The real strength of the Teutonic kingdom,” writes a historian, “was wasted in the pursuit of a glittering toy; once in his reign each emperor undertook a long and dangerous expedition, and dissipated in an inglorious and ever-to-be-repeated strife the forces that might have achieved conquest elsewhere, or made him feared and obeyed at home.” This was the expedition into Italy, where, as a rule, the King of Germany, after his election, went to receive the diadem of the emperor from the hands of the pope. And, equally as a rule, the pope opposed the German king because he did not wish him to become too powerful. The emperor would depose the pope and the pope would depose the emperor, each claiming authority over the other. Both Germany and Italy were in a state of continual ferment. Cruel private wars, robbery, and violence were common. Men followed in very truth

the good old rule, the simple plan—
That they should take who have the power
And they should keep who can.

The princes and dukes who held estates in various parts of the two countries had great power. They were continually quarrelling amongst themselves and forming plots against the emperor. Each man strove to increase his power over the vassals in his own territory, and if possible to extend that territory at the expense of some one else. And in the attempts of one of these noble families to increase their power we can trace the birth of the little independent country of Switzerland.

The House of Hapsburg.—In the year 1273 the choice of the German electors fell upon Rudolph of Hapsburg. This nobleman held a small estate and castle in the north of what is now Switzerland. There is a tradition that an ancestor of his family was one day hunting in this district when he lost his favourite hawk. After some time he found it perched on the top of a lofty mountain ridge. Pleased with the view from this point, he afterwards built a castle on the spot and called it Hawk Castle, Habichtsburg or Hapsburg. Rudolph seems to have been an exception to most of the German kings and to have had some desire for national unity. He made peace with the pope, gave up all claim to Italy, and was never crowned emperor at Rome. During his reign he secured for his family the duchy of Austria in a war with the King of Bohemia. Thus the head of the house of Hapsburg became Duke of Austria. At a much later date Austria was joined with Hungary under one monarch, who belonged to the house of Hapsburg. Thus we may regard the now ruined Hawk Castle in the north of Switzerland as the cradle of the Austrian Imperial family.

The Forest Cantons.—To the east of the Swiss estates of Rudolph of Hapsburg lay three mountain districts or cantons round about the Lake of Lucerne. They were known as the Waldstatten or Forest Cantons, and they were leagued together for purposes of defence. The unsettled state of the empire led to the formation of various leagues of this kind, and before long we shall hear of others of a similar nature. The Forest Cantons were Schwyz, Uri, and Unterwalden, and they were inhabited by a hardy race of German mountaineers. The dangers to which they were continually exposed in their efforts to support themselves in the wild mountainous regions had made these people strong in body and quick in mind, lovers of freedom and impatient of restraint. The men of Schwyz seem to have taken the lead in the movement which led eventually to the foundation of the republic now known by their name—the land of the Schwyz, or Switzerland.

There seems to have been an alliance, or at least an understanding, among the people of these three districts from very early times. But it was in 1291 that they formed the “League of Perpetual Alliance” and put down in writing the various rules which were to govern the confederation of the Swiss cantons. The immediate cause of this new arrangement was the attempt on the part of the Hapsburg dukes of Austria to add the Forest Cantons to their family estates. For some time they had gradually been encroaching on the liberties of the three cantons. They claimed certain duties or taxes from the mountaineers, and sent overseers to collect them, who conducted themselves in a very arrogant and insolent manner. The story goes that three leaders from the cantons, named Furst, Stauffer, and Arnold of Melch-

thal, met together in secret and solemnly vowed to free their country from the oppressor. They were joined by increasing numbers of their countrymen, and before long the Cantons were ready for revolt.

William Tell.—To this period belongs the legend of William Tell, the Swiss patriot. According to the story, he was one of the chiefs of the confederates of the Forest Cantons, and son-in-law of Furst. One day Gessler, one of the Austrian overseers or lieutenant-governors, placed his cap upon a pole, and set it up in the market-place of Altorf, ordering each of the villagers to uncover and do obeisance in passing it. Tell refused to comply with this order, and walked proudly past the pole with his head erect and covered. He was at once seized by Gessler's guards, who brought him before their master.

Gessler was furious at what he considered the insolence of Tell, and, knowing him to be a famous archer, ordered him to display his skill by shooting at an apple to be placed on the head of his own son, a boy of twelve years old. We may imagine the feelings of the father as he stood before his own dearly-loved child and prepared to obey the command of the Austrian tyrant. But though the circumstances were not calculated to steady his hand, the cunning of the archer prevailed over the fears of the father, and Tell's arrow clove the apple without harming the child.

As the father turned to leave the market-place with his boy there fell to the ground an arrow which he had concealed in his breast. Gessler saw Tell stoop to pick it up, and at once asked him why he had provided himself with this second shaft. "To kill thee, tyrant, if I had failed," was the fearless answer, which gave the Austrian an opportunity for revenge.

"Thou shalt go," he cried in great anger, "to a dungeon, where neither sun nor moon shall shine on thee, there to be devoured by reptiles." Tell was therefore hurried away and placed in a boat, to be conveyed across Lake Lucerne to a castle on the opposite shore. On the way a sudden storm swept down upon the lake, and Gessler, in great fear for his life, ordered Tell to be unbound, that he might steer the boat to a place of safety. The patriot did as he was ordered, and took the boat to a small flat rock, which formed a kind of natural landing-place. When they drew near to this rock he suddenly leapt from the boat and pushed it back from the shore. Then he made his escape to the woods near Gessler's castle.

The boat was tossed about for some time, but at last Gessler and his men were able to effect a landing. But as the governor walked towards the castle, an arrow from behind a bush pierced his heart, and he fell to the ground crying, "It is Tell's shaft"; as indeed it was, according to the story, which is, unfortunately, not true. There was a man named William Tell who lived at this time, but of his exploits we know nothing. We do know, however, that the confederates rose against the Austrian duke, drove out his governors, and laid the foundations of the Swiss Republic. During the contest with Austria they won several famous victories, the names of which are household words in the cottages of the Swiss peasantry. Two of the most famous were Morgarten and Sempach.

The Battle of Morgarten, 1315.—Duke Leopold of Austria determined to punish the insolent mountaineers who had dared to rebel against the Hapsburgs. He summoned his vassals, and in a short time had a large and splendid army of horse and foot ready for the campaign, which he expected would prove but a triumphal

march through the Forest Cantons. He sent divisions of this army by various roads into the mountainous country round Lake Lucerne, and he himself led the main portion against the Schwyz.

The duke was a good soldier and a brave man, but he took no precautions against surprise, for he despised the mountaineers, and thought them almost unworthy of battle. When his brilliant army reached the narrow pass of Morgarten and was placed between the steep mountain side and the lake below, there fell upon them a shower of stones, rocks, and trunks of trees, sent down by the Schwyz, who had concealed themselves at the head of the pass. The Austrian army was caught in a trap and thrown into confusion. Then the Confederates swept down the slopes and fell upon the enemy. A fearful struggle followed. The Austrians fought bravely, but all their valour was of no avail against the desperate onset of the mountaineers, who hewed numbers of them down with their halberds, and finally drove the remainder down the pass. Numbers of the Austrians leapt into the lake in their terror and were drowned. Others made good their escape, among them Leopold, who hurried away "looking like death and quite distracted." The victory of the mountaineers strengthened their cause considerably, and the Forest Cantons were gradually joined by the men of other districts, eager to join in the fight for freedom and to share the advantages of membership in a league which was able to defy and defeat the powerful house of Austria. But the struggle was not yet ended.

The Battle of Sempach, 1386—Arnold Winkelried.—Seventy years later another Duke Leopold of Austria sustained a severe defeat at Sempach, where he found posted in a wood not far from the town a small Confeder-

ate army, which he had been led to believe was at that time encamped near Zurich, some miles away. The mountaineers had carefully chosen their ground, so that the duke's cavalry should be at a disadvantage, and they had the satisfaction of seeing the knights dismount and send away their horses in charge of attendants. Leopold drew up his army, which numbered about six thousand, in a solid body, prepared to receive the attacks of the mountaineers on the points of their strong lances. The Confederates, about fifteen hundred in all, had few men in armour. Their weapons were of various kinds, and they were little skilled in their use. It is no cause for wonder that they beat against that iron wall, bristling with spear-points, with as little effect as the waves may dash against a rock-bound coast. More than fifty of their men had fallen, and the Austrians began to advance, so as to enclose the little band of patriots. Destruction seemed inevitable. Despair filled even those brave hearts, and a silence as of death fell upon the Confederates as their relentless foes advanced. Then the situation was saved by the heroic deed of a single man.

Arnold von Winkelried saw the object of the enemy's manoeuvre. It was, indeed, only too evident. He saw also that their only hope was to break the line of spears fast circling round them and make a passage into the ranks of the Austrians. One man might do it. His courage rose to the occasion. "I will cut a road for you" he cried; "take care of my wife and children." Then he rushed forward and dashed against the hostile rank. Four of the spears broke on his helmet, so great was the force of his onslaught; a number were buried in his body, and he fell, wounded to death. But a breach had been made in the bristling line of spears, and through the opening



STATUE OF WINKELRIED.

(*Gebr. Wehrli.*)

in the Austrian rank the Confederates forced and fought their victorious way. The armour of the enemy, which had before been so impenetrable, was now an encumbrance to its wearers because of its ponderous weight. The threatening spears were too long and too heavy to be used at close quarters. The Austrians reeled and broke before the devoted band of patriots.

Duke Leopold saw his standard fall, and was advised by those near him to take refuge in flight. This he scorned to do, and he urged his horse to the spot where the fight was fiercest. When the end of the struggle brought victory to the Confederates, the Duke of Austria was found dead among the heaped-up piles of slain. Nearly two hundred of the Swiss had given their lives for liberty, and among them lay the patriot to whom the victory of Sempach was due.

Shortly afterwards the Confederates won another victory over the Austrians at Naefels, and at the end of the fourteenth century their League included eight states, and was known as the Old League of High Germany. It must not be forgotten that the Confederates at first had no wish to form a separate nation. They were Germans and loyal to the emperor. What they desired was freedom from oppression on the part of the nobles, but freedom under the empire. In time, however, they became more and more independent, and at the beginning of the sixteenth century Switzerland became practically a separate country. But it was not till the year 1648, nearly four centuries after the time of William Tell, that the independence of the little mountain state was fully recognised by the European Powers.

The Hanseatic League.—To the disorder and insecurity of the empire in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries

we may trace the formation of another confederation known as the League of the Hansa. This was a union of a large number of important trading towns, chiefly in North Germany, for purposes of defence. The seas of Northern Europe were infested by pirates, and the trade-routes into Italy and to the Mediterranean ports were beset by robber knights who plundered the travelling merchants of their goods or levied ruinous tolls upon them. The object of the Hanseatic League was chiefly to defend the traders from these pirates and bandits, who ought to have been put down by the officers of the empire if they had not been elsewhere engaged. Between the years 1360 and 1630 the League was a great power in Europe. About eighty-five towns were included in the confederation, the chief of these being Lubeck, Cologne, Brunswick, Dantzic, Hamburg, and Bremen. The navies of the League protected the merchant ships from pirates, and her armies cleared the overland trade-routes of the robber knights. She carried on successful war with Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, and by threatening Edward IV. of England obtained from him important trading privileges. In London, Bruges, Bergen, and Novgorod factories were established, where the goods of the Hansa merchants were stored and distributed.

The Hanseatic League did not found a European nation like the League of the Forest Cantons. As the trade-routes changed chiefly owing to the discoveries of the travellers of whom we shall shortly read, the power of the Hansa declined. The League was finally dissolved, but Lubeck, Bremen, and Hamburg are still "free cities" within the new German Empire, just as the towns of the Hansa were free cities within the Holy Roman Empire.

CHAPTER XI—THE CITIES OF NORTHERN ITALY

The Italian City Republics.—In the thirteenth century there were in the northern portion of Italy about two hundred cities which are often spoken of in history as the Italian city republics. Each was a small state in itself, acknowledging the emperor as a kind of overlord, but practically independent. Frederick Barbarossa tried to increase the imperial power over these cities, and when the people of Milan refused to obey him he marched against them, almost destroyed their city, and drove the greater part of them into exile. Other cities in Northern Italy came to the help of Milan. The Lombard League was formed, and at Legnano, in 1176, the soldiers of the Italian cities met and defeated the army of the emperor, who was forced to confirm the rights of the cities to self-government. They became “free cities” within the empire, like the towns of the Hansa.

The Lombard League did not lead to the same result as the League of the Forest Cantons—namely, the founding of a new European nation. The Italian city republics had amassed great wealth chiefly by trading with the East, and they were bitterly jealous of each other. Wars between them were frequent and each strove for its own hand. “Venice first, Italy afterwards,” was the maxim of one of the most powerful of these cities, and the same narrow, selfish spirit ruled all the others. Within each small republic, too, there were constant quarrels. We have seen how the pope and the emperor were continually at variance, and how each strove to lessen the power of

the other. Both pope and emperor had supporters in each of the Italian cities. Those who adhered to the emperor were named Ghibellines, while the supporters of the pope were known as Guelphs. The history of these city republics is to a great extent a long and tedious account of the never-ending quarrels of the Guelphs and Ghibellines.

Family feuds were also frequent in the Italian cities. We read, for example, in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* of a standing quarrel in Verona between the Montagues and the Capulets, and of the misery which was caused by this unreasoning hatred and strife. The result of this want of unity was, in the end, loss of liberty. Many of the city republics passed into the hands of powerful and wealthy families, who gained almost kingly power over their fellow-citizens and generally ruled for their own profit and advancement. And at a later date the northern portion of Italy became the battle-ground of Europe. The soldiers of France, Germany, and Spain in turn overran the fair plain of Lombardy and sacked the cities which had of old placed their own advantage before that of the state.

But there is a fairer side to this picture of unpatriotic self-seeking. In spite of all their strife and their want of patriotism, the world owes a great and lasting debt to the merchants of these Italian cities. For many of them spent their private fortunes in employing painters, sculptors, and architects, whose works of art have made such cities as Venice, Florence, Milan, Genoa, Pisa, and Padua the wonder of the world. They also gave encouragement and support to men of letters, poets, historians, and other prose writers, whose works became models for future ages.

Venice—Wedding the Sea.

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean,
Rising with her tiara of proud towers
At airy distance, with majestic motion,
A ruler of the waters and their powers.

So the poet Byron writes of Venice, recalling the period of her glory, which was at its height in the fourteenth century. The city controlled the coasts and waters of the Eastern Mediterranean, and held as possessions several of the Greek islands. She gave help to the warriors of the Fourth Crusade, and received from them large tracts of land which they had won by the sword. The Adriatic was regarded as a possession of the Venetians, as its name of Gulf of Venice testifies to-day. The pope confirmed this claim when in 1177 he sent to the Doge or Duke of Venice a jewelled ring which was to be used in the ceremony of "wedding the Adriatic." This was annually performed in the following manner.

The doge set out in the *Bucentaur*, the large and beautifully decorated state-vessel, accompanied by a brilliant assembly of Venetian nobles and foreign ambassadors. Following the *Bucentaur* came a large number of smaller vessels, crowded with officers of state and their friends, and numerous boats containing parties of the Venetian people. A call was made at one of the islands, on which dwelt a community of monks, who met the doge and offered him a bunch of dark red roses in a silver vase. The doge kept one of these flowers for himself and gave the rest to the nobles around him. The procession then passed on to the mouth of the harbour, where the *Bucentaur* was turned with her prow towards the sea. The doge, attended by a bishop, now moved to a small window in the rear of the state-vessel,



THE APPROACH TO VENICE,—J. M. W. TURNER.

when the latter prayed, "Vouchsafe, O Lord, that this sea appertain to us, and to all those who sail over its waters give peace and quiet. We beseech Thee to hear us." The doge now stepped forward, holding in his right hand the consecrated ring. This he threw into the sea with the words, "We wed thee, O Sea, in token of true and lasting domination."

The domination of Venice did not last beyond the fifteenth century. As we shall see in a later chapter, the discoveries of certain explorers caused the trade-routes to be changed, and Venice gradually fell from her pride of place.

The Travels of Marco Polo.—From Venice there set out in 1254 a small party of Venetians who made a journey across Asia to the city now known as Peking, and at that time the capital of Kublai-Khan, the Mongol or Tartar king. One of these was Marco Polo, "a wise and noble citizen of Venice," who afterwards caused an account of his travels to be set down in writing. The traveller related many things which are not to be believed, but on the whole his *Travels* give a fairly correct account of the many wonders which he saw in the lands of Central Asia.

The journey occupied three years, though this included several long sojourns in towns on the route. The travellers found the great khan in his summer retreat to the north of Peking enjoying "king's weather," for his magicians had been charged to disperse all fogs and to prevent any fall of rain while their royal master was living in his summer palace. "And you must know," says Marco Polo, "that these astrologers, who know so many kinds of enchantments, work the wonder I am about to relate. When the great khan is seated at

dinner in the principal dining-hall, the table of which is eight cubits in length, and the cups are on the floor ten paces from the table, filled with wine, milk, and other good beverages, these clever magicians, by their arts, make these cups rise by themselves, and without any one touching them, they are placed before the great khan."

We are given a careful description of the khan's palace at Pekin; the surrounding wall "very thick, ten feet in height, all white and battlemented"; its inside walls covered with gold and silver, on which were paintings of dragons, birds, and horses; the dining-hall, which would hold 6000 men; the ceilings painted and varnished so as to shine like crystal; the "green hill" near the northern door, the admiration of every one and planted with the finest collection of trees in the world. The ceremonial feasting in the palace is also described. The table of the khan is raised above the rest, and the nobles who wait on him are required to cover their mouths and noses in fine cloth of gold, "so that their breath may not contaminate the meat and drink of their master." A band plays when the khan is about to drink, and when he grasps the goblet the whole company fall upon their knees.

The poor were the especial care of the khan, says the traveller in a description of the methods of government and administration of the Mongol prince. "He had a list made of all the poorest houses in the town where they were usually short of food, and supplied them liberally with wheat and other grain according to the size of their families, and bread was never refused to any applying at the palace for it; it is stated that at least 30,000 persons avail themselves of this daily throughout the year. His kindness to his poor subjects

makes them almost worship him." We with what a greedy ear the people of the West would listen to these travellers' tales of the Far East when Marco Polo returned to Europe. One thing is certain : such tales would undoubtedly help to broaden the minds of the listeners. To them the lands about the Mediterranean had been "the world," and beyond these all was savage and barbarous. Now they heard of "folks beyond the mountains" who were in many ways as highly civilised as themselves, and who, strange to say, had never bowed the knee to Cæsar Augustus.

The Florentine Republic.

But Arno wins us to the fair white walls,
Where the Etrurian Athens claims and keeps
A softer feeling for her fairy halls.
Girt by her theatre of hills, she reaps
Her corn, and wine, and oil, and Plenty leaps
To laughing life, with her redundant horn.
Along the banks where smiling Arno sweeps
Was modern Luxury of Commerce born.
And buried Learning rose, redeem'd to a new morn.

So Byron speaks of Florence, the "most illustrious and fortunate of Italian republics," which was at the height of her power and glory during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—the centre of manufactures, literature, and art.

The history of Florence is full of great names, of poets, painters, sculptors, statesmen, who were either natives of the city or closely connected with it in their life and work. We shall see later that this city had a great share in the advancement of European civilisation. At present we shall confine ourselves to a consideration of three outstanding figures, a poet, a painter, and a statesman, who belong to the earlier history of the Florentine city.

Dante Alighie'ri—The "**Divine Comedy**."—Dante, the great Italian poet, was born in Florence in the year 1265, and spent his youth in his native city. We know little of his early life, but we find him as a young man engaged in one of the faction fights of Florence. "At the battle of Campaldino," he says himself, "when the Ghibelline party were almost all killed or destroyed, I was present, not a novice in arms, and there had much fear and afterwards very great delight in the various occurrences of the battle."

The poet loved the daughter of a Florentine, the beautiful Beatrice Portinari, whom he had known from his earliest youth. He gives us a picture of the gracious maiden as she went to and fro in the streets of the Italian city. "This most gentle lady," he writes, "was in so great favour with all that when she passed in the street every one ran to see her. And when she approached any one, so much was his heart touched that he did not dare to raise his eyes or to answer her greeting. And she, crowned and clothed with humility, went on her way, showing no pride in that which she saw and heard. And many said when she passed, 'This is not a woman, but one of the most beautiful angels of heaven.'"

Beatrice died at an early age, but she remained enshrined in the poet's heart as his ideal of womanly grace and perfect beauty. He has made her name and memory as immortal as his own. To speak of Dante is to call to mind also the maiden who inspired his life and work.

The poet took service in the Florentine state, became an ambassador, and afterwards one of the chief magistrates of the city. Meanwhile he wrote many poems which

seem to have become well known among the Florentines. "One day," writes a chronicler, "Dante, walking in the street, heard a blacksmith beating iron upon the anvil and singing some of his verses like a song, jumbling the lines together and confusing them, so that it seemed to Dante that he was receiving a great injury. He said nothing, but going into the blacksmith's shop, where there were many articles made in iron, he took up his hammer and pincers and scales and many other things and threw them out into the road. The blacksmith, turning round upon him, cried out, 'What are you doing? Are you mad?' 'What are *you* doing?' said Dante. 'I am working at my proper business,' said the blacksmith, 'and you are spoiling my work throwing it out into the road.' Said Dante, 'If you do not like me to spoil your things do not spoil mine.' 'What things of yours am I spoiling?' asked the man; and Dante replied, 'You are singing something of mine, but not as I made it. I have no other trade but this, and you spoil it for me.' The blacksmith, too proud to acknowledge his fault, but not knowing how to reply, gathered up his things and returned to his work, and when he sang again left Dante alone."

The poet had his share in the strife between Guelph and Ghibelline, and became an ardent imperialist. In one of the numerous struggles for power Dante was driven into exile, and afterwards made, along with other exiles, an unsuccessful attempt to enter Florence by force of arms. The latter years of his life were very unhappy. He found a poor kind of refuge in the house of a noble of Ravenna, where he wrote the greater part of the *Divine Comedy*, the first great work of modern European literature. His chequered career



BEATA BEATRIX.—DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

(From the original painting in the Tate Gallery.)

reminds us somewhat of our own great poet John Milton, and there is also a certain resemblance in subject between *Paradise Lost* and the poem of Dante, for both deal with “things invisible to mortal sight.” The *Divine Comedy* tells of the poet’s visionary visit to other worlds than ours, to the abode of departed spirits, and of what he saw there. He meets with Beatrice in his wanderings:—

I once beheld, at the approach of day,
The orient sky all stained with roseate hues,
And the other heaven with light serene adorned,

And the sun’s face uprising, overshadowed,
So that, by temperate influence of vapours,
The eye sustained his aspect for long while ;

Thus in the bosom of a cloud of flowers,
Which from those hands angelic were thrown up,
And now descended inside and without

With a crown of olive o’er a snow-white veil,
Appeared a lady, under a green mantle,
Vested in colours of the living flame.

As to the full meaning of the poem, the “mystic, unfathomable song,” as a German writer calls the *Divine Comedy*, you will learn more at a later date. It is something to know a little about it and about the man who wrote it, the sad and earnest singer who sleeps in Ravenna in a tomb which bears the simple epitaph : “Here am I, Dante, laid, shut out from my native shores.”

Giotto the Shepherd Boy.—There has been handed down to us a portrait of Dante, said to have been painted by his artist friend Giotto. This famous painter spent his early years as a simple shepherd boy in the mountain fields outside the city of Florence. It is said that the shepherd lad was one day discovered by a great Italian

painter making a drawing of a sheep with a piece of stone on a rough slab of slate. The painter saw in the rough work of the shepherd boy the mark of genius, and took him away to be taught and trained. Whether or not this story be true, the fact remains that Giotto did become a famous painter and sculptor, and has left, in several towns of Italy, in Florence, in Padua, in Assisi, and elsewhere, works of art which testify to his power with brush and chisel. The graceful campanile, or bell-tower, of the Florentine cathedral, with its beautiful sculptures, is his work; while in many a church and chapel and gallery there are paintings of his which prove his eminence as a composer, designer, and colourist. In the palace of the chief magistrate at Florence he painted a series of frescoes, which were afterwards covered with whitewash by some ignorant hand, and which were only revealed to the world in the nineteenth century. The paintings were badly damaged and the colouring had vanished, but it was possible to trace the portraits of several famous Florentines. A similar fate befell the frescoes painted by the master in the Florentine chapel of Santa Croce, which are said by some to be his greatest productions.

Giotto was a tireless worker and had a ready wit. One very hot day he was hard at work in Naples when King Robert came to his studio to inspect the great painter's work. "If I were you I would not work when the weather is so hot," said the king. "Neither would I," returned the other with a quick smile, "if I were you."

But the most famous story about Giotto is the following, from the pen of a chronicler: "One day a messenger came to the painter from the pope for specimens of his work. Giotto, who was very polite, took a piece of

paper, and, putting his arm close to his side to make it like a compass, drew, with a brush full of red colour, with a turn of his hand, a circle so round and so perfect in outline that it was a marvel to see. This done, he said to the messenger, 'Here is the drawing.' 'Am I to have nothing but this?' asked the other, stupefied. 'That is enough, and too much. Send it with the others, and we shall see if it is understood.'" This was the famous () of Giotto, which, it is said, exactly conveyed the painter's meaning to the mind of the pope, who employed Giotto in some of the work he had in view when he sent out his messenger.

The Medici.—The people of the Italian city republics quarrelled and fought amongst themselves, and failed to notice that their liberties were gradually slipping away from them. Several of the cities became practically possessions of influential families, who held a power more despotic than that of the emperor had ever been. Thus in Florence the control of affairs passed gradually into the hands of the Medici family. The first member of this family to rise to power was Cosimo de Medici, an able and wealthy merchant, who was called by the servile Florentines the "Friend of the People and Father of his Country." He made himself supreme in Florence. "Nothing is denied to Cosimo," said one; "he is judge of war and peace, moderator of the laws; not so much a citizen as lord of the country; the policy of the republic is settled in his house; he gives commands to the magistrates. Nothing regal is wanting to him but the name and state of a king."

Cosimo had great skill in management. He played off one party of Florentines against another; gained the goodwill of the people by organising great galas such as

the Italian loves; bought the favour of the nobles and richer citizens by gifts of money and promotion to profitable offices; never spoke ill of any one, in fact spoke little at any time, and made no great show of his power, for his authority was "soft and amiable and such as is necessary for a free town." But Florence was no longer free; and her case is typical of many of the city republics of Northern Italy.

CHAPTER XII—THE NEW LEARNING IN ITALY

Dante and Virgil.—One of the guides of Dante in his journey through the under world, of which he tells us in his *Divine Comedy*, was the Latin poet Virgil, whom he calls his master. Virgil was born at a village near Mantua in the year 70 B.C., and became one of the most famous of Roman poets. His chief work was the *Æneid*, which tells of the travels and adventures of Æneas, the supposed founder of Rome, and the legends associated with his name. Tennyson calls Virgil the "wielder of the stateliest measure ever moulded by the lips of man," and more than one of our poets have turned some of his poems into English verse.

The fact that Dante chose as his guide this poet of early times shows that the minds of the men of his time were turning to the works of the Latin writers of the old Roman Empire, of whom Virgil was one of the greatest. The study of these Latin writers also led the scholars of Dante's time to the works of the Greeks, who had given the world its first literature long before the Romans had risen to power. This is one of the chief European facts

of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, that scholars were turning to the works of the ancients, and eagerly reading and studying all the poems and prose works which could be found in the libraries of Europe. Since the time of Charlemagne men's minds had been gradually prepared for this increased interest in study. Men like



DANTE.

Lanfranc had kept alive the love of learning even in ages when the chief business of men was war. The Crusades had added greatly to the knowledge, and had broadened the minds, of the people of Europe. The growth of commerce had also done much in the same direction, and had increased the wealth of the community, which, as we have seen in the case of Florence, was often spent by those

who had made it in encouraging painters, sculptors, and poets. Dante, it is true, did not receive much encouragement from his native city, nor yet from his patron of Ravenna, who placed him at table among the humblest of his servants. But the great Italian poet helped to lay the foundation of the movement which turned the minds of many men from war and arms to the arts of peace and the pursuit of learning.

Petrarch, the Laureate.—The share of Italy in the European movement which is known as the Revival of Learning was very conspicuous, and foremost among the leaders was the poet Petrarch, who was a youth of seventeen when Dante died. He was born in camp before Florence when the Ghibellines were trying to take the city, and some months afterwards was taken to his father's estate at Ancisa. The infant was carried by a servant on horseback, in a bundle at the end of a staff, and in the fording of a river was almost drowned. As a boy he lived in France at the town of Avignon, then the residence of the pope, and was taught by an old Italian schoolmaster who had much learning but little principle, for he borrowed books and money of his pupil, sold the books, and conveniently forgot to repay the money. Petrarch gave himself up to a close study of the ancient writers, and made a collection of manuscripts containing their works, travelling from town to town and castle to castle in search of the precious parchments, which he often found hidden away among lumber, or among old books, accounted by their owners as of little or no value.

Meanwhile he was writing many Latin poems, some of which took the form of letters to the writers of the olden days, whose works he loved so well. He also began a history of Rome, beginning with the legend of

Romulus and Remus, the founders of the city, and tracing the story to the time of Julius Caesar by means of biographies of its leading men. When he reached the age of thirty-six his fame as a poet was well established, and one day he was summoned to Rome to be crowned Laureate as poet and historian. He set out for the city in whose honour he had done so much, and was duly crowned with a laureate wreath, which he afterwards hung on the altar of the great church of Saint Peter.

The poet's love of the city of Rome was combined with a passionate desire to see her once more take her place as the capital of a united Italy. He therefore gladly welcomed the action of Cola Rienzi, a citizen of Rome, who in 1347 made himself master of the city and deprived the quarrelsome nobles of all share in the government. Petrarch had friends among the nobility, but he warmly supported Rienzi, who established a republic and called himself Tribune of the People, a title which recalled to the mind of Petrarch the period of Roman greatness which he had made his especial study. But the success of Rienzi turned his head; he lost the support of the people and was driven into exile. Thus the dream of Petrarch was dispelled. Italian unity was not yet to be realised, not indeed for more than five hundred years after the time of Rienzi.

The name of Dante is coupled with that of Beatrice, and readers of the poems of Petrarch are familiar with his references to Laura. Who this lady was we do not know. Many of Petrarch's friends believed that she did not exist, but that the poet wrote in praise and honour not of a lady named Laura, but of the laurel or laureate wreath which had been conferred upon him as the chief of the poets and historians of his time.

Petrarch is specially interesting to us because it is quite likely that while staying at Padua in 1372 he was visited by our own great poet Chaucer, who was in Italy at that time on the king's business. In Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* the clerk tells a story which he said that he had learnt "at Padua of a worthy clerk, Francis



PETRARCH.

Petrarch, the laureate poet." The story tells of the weighty troubles of a lady named Griselda and the patience with which she bore them, and it was written in Latin by Petrarch, who had it from another Italian poet of his time. Whether Chaucer actually saw and talked with the great Italian poet or not, he at least learned a great deal from the literature of Italy.

Petrarch died in his seventieth year, and was buried in Arqua.

The Fall of Constantinople, 1453. —The movement begun by Petrarch and others of his time was greatly helped by an event which happened in the year 1453. This was the capture of Constantinople by the Turks and the fall of the Eastern or Byzantine Empire.

The city was invested by the Sultan Mohammed II. in the spring of the year. The Turkish army numbered some 200,000, and was well trained and well disciplined. The Greeks were divided among themselves, and found a false security in the thought that the imperial and Christian city would never be permitted to fall into the hands of the barbarians. They were, however, mistaken. The sultan showed much determination in the conduct of the siege. He brought a number of galleys into the harbour of Constantinople, and also made desperate assaults upon the landward wall. Before long a breach was made, and the Greeks were summoned to surrender. The Emperor Constantine refused, and four days later the city was carried by storm. Numbers of Christians were slaughtered by the Turks and many prisoners were taken. The last Greek emperor fell fighting bravely in the breach where the chief attack of the Turks was made. The cathedral church of Saint Sophia became a Mohammedan mosque, which it has remained ever since. Thus the Turks gained the footing in Europe for which they had striven since the time of the first Crusades.

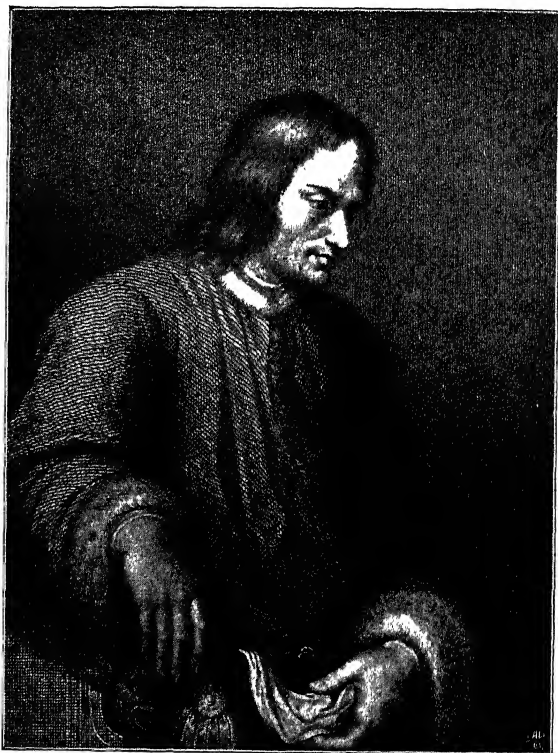
The establishment of the Turks in Constantinople had the effect of driving westward a large number of scholarly Greeks from the cities of the Greek Empire. These men brought with them manuscripts containing the works of the Greek writers who had flourished long before the

poets and historians in whose writings Petrarch took such delight. They also brought with them a love of learning and culture, and their influence was soon felt in the schools, universities, courts, and cities of the West.

Lorenzo the Magnificent and Savonarola.—Lorenzo de Medici, the grandson of Cosimo, held the chief power in Florence in the middle of the fifteenth century. He was a liberal patron of painters, sculptors, poets, and prose writers, and himself wrote poems which his courtiers told him were as good as those of Dante. The luxury of his court and the splendour of the entertainments which he gave to keep the favour of the Florentines gained for him the title of "the Magnificent." The people of Florence were completely in his power, and he was surrounded by crowds of flatterers eager for his favour. But there was one man in Florence who did not fear Lorenzo. This was Savonarola, the prior of the monastery of San Marco. He saw that freedom had departed from Florence, that the court of Lorenzo was lost in idle luxury, that everywhere goodness was despised and wickedness honoured, and that one of the results of the movement set afoot by Petrarch was that people had come to give to the works of the ancients that worship and reverence which they ought to have given to virtue and truth.

To be learned in ancient literature was regarded as the chief object in life, and wickedness of every kind was common in the city. Savonarola made up his mind to rouse the citizens of Florence to better things. He began to preach in the cathedral, and with an entire absence of fear he rebuked the whole of the people from Lorenzo himself down to the meanest parasite who cringed for his favour. He prophesied ruin and destruction to the city, and named the time when it should be overthrown. His

sermons produced a great effect upon the minds of the Florentines. He bade them bring their rich clothes, their jewels, and the works of art which they had collected,



LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT.

and burn them in the streets, and many obeyed him. Lorenzo treated the fiery preacher with a kind of amused contempt, but he had a great deal of respect for him. It was new for the Magnifico, as he was called, to meet with a man who did not fawn upon him. And when he lay

upon his deathbed he sent for Savonarola. The monk came at his summons and told him that three things were required of him—to believe in God, to restore all that he had unjustly gained, and to give back to Florence her liberty. Lorenzo sadly replied that he could do the first two things, but that the third was beyond his power.

Before long Lorenzo died, and the prophecy of Savonarola was fulfilled. Florence was captured by the French, to whom Piero de Medici, the son of Lorenzo, made a shameful submission. The Florentines drove out the Medici, and a government under Savonarola was set up. New laws were passed, and in a short time great changes were wrought in the city. Carnivals and galas gave place to religious services and processions. The women and the young men threw aside their silks and jewels, and dressed plainly and soberly. The faction cries in the streets were changed to shouts of “Viva Gesu Cristo nostro Re” (Long live Jesus Christ our king).

But the change was not permanent. Savonarola had enemies in Rome. The pope belonged to the Medici family, and he worked for the destruction of the prior. Before long he was successful. By his plots he caused Savonarola to lose credit with the people of Florence, and the monk was put to death after suffering horrible tortures.

Michael Angelo.—Lorenzo de Medici at one time gathered together a number of ancient busts, statues, and other works of the sculptor's art, and placed them in one of the gardens of his palace. Then he sent for a Florentine sculptor of renown, and told him to use the place as a training school for his pupils. Among these was a youth named Michael Angelo, who soon astonished both his teacher and the Magnifico by the excellence, the beauty, and grace of his work. “After a few days,”

writes the chronicler, "the lad was so advanced as to copy a faun's head in marble, and though he had never before touched either marble or chisel, his attempt was so successful that the Magnifico was startled."

This youth afterwards became famous both as sculptor and painter, and he has left in several towns of Italy memorials of his genius. One of his earliest works was a gigantic statue of David, the shepherd king of Israel. The marble for this work consisted of a huge block which had been spoilt by another sculptor, and which was made over to Michael Angelo by the Florentine authorities, who bade him try his chisel upon it. The young sculptor made a model in wax of David, the shepherd boy, with his sling. Then he built a tower of wood about the block of marble and set to work with fiery energy, allowing no one to see him at work. The task took three years to accomplish, and was then set up before the chief public hall of Florence.

It is said that Giotto would never permit any one to call him by the honourable title of *maestro*, or master. Michael Angelo, however, had no scruples about taking all the honour which was paid to his genius. He considered himself the equal of the greatest, and when he was commissioned to make the statues for the tomb which Pope Julius II. was preparing for himself he showed an independence of spirit which roused the anger of the pope, who was accustomed to obedience from all around him. The two quarrelled, and the fiery sculptor left Rome, refusing to finish the work. Nor did he return till he was sent for by the pope, who was unwilling to lose his sculptor, and was secretly proud of his independence. He afterwards set Michael Angelo to work on some frescoes in his private chapel in Rome.

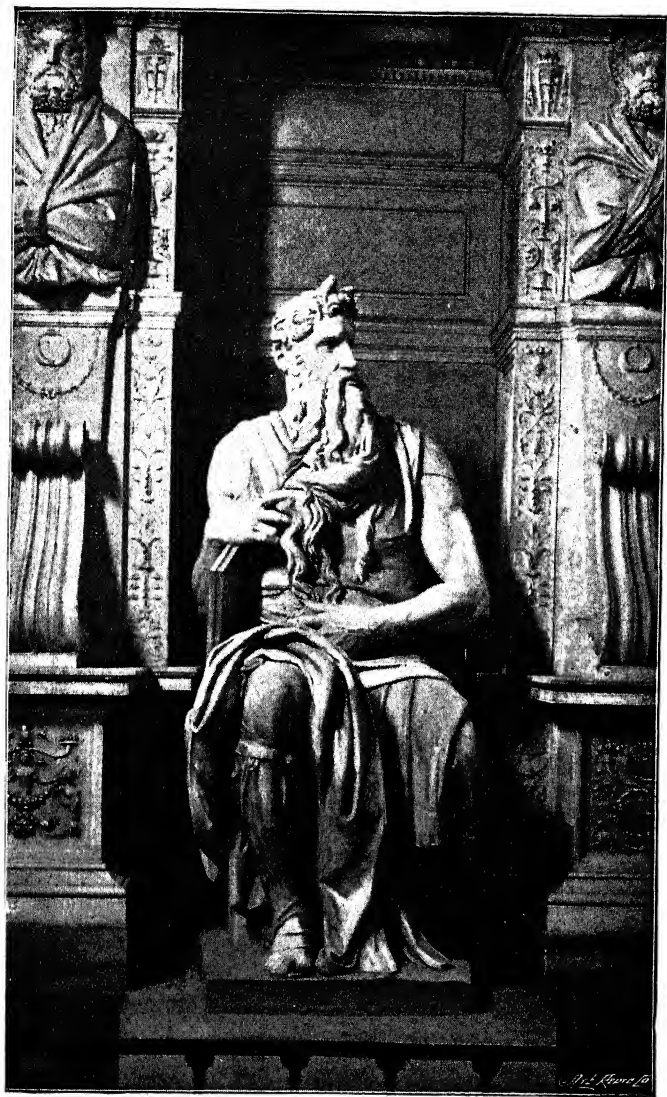
This work was given to the artist on the suggestion of a rival painter, who wished to see Michael Angelo humbled, and thought that if the sculptor were set to work with the brush he would bring discredit upon himself. But the genius of Michael Angelo was triumphant, and the frescoes of the Sistine, as the pope's chapel was called, established his right to be considered first in painting as he was first in sculpture. Some of Michael Angelo's best work in marble was carried out for the tombs of the Medici in the church of San Lorenzo in Florence. Another well-known work of this great sculptor is the statue of Moses, which was placed over the tomb of Pope Julius in Rome.

The last years of the artist's life were spent in Rome. Here he painted in the Sistine Chapel his great fresco of the Last Judgment, which occupied him for eight years. He was also appointed architect of the present church of St. Peter, and he planned and commenced the building of the great dome which is such a prominent feature among the buildings of the city. Michael Angelo died in 1564. We must remember him as one of the greatest artists of all time, and as a representative of painting and sculpture in the share taken by Italy in the Revival of Learning, just as Petrarch is a representative of poetry.

The Invention of Printing. — Laurence Coster of Haarlem, in the Netherlands, and John Gutenberg of Mainz, in Germany, are the rival claimants for the honour of having invented the plan of using movable type in printing. It is impossible to decide which of the two men was really the inventor, the first finder of the plan. Perhaps equal honour should be accorded to each, for by a curious coincidence the two men seem to have begun the work at about the same time, neither

knowing what the other was doing. This was in the year 1436, and thus we see how the printer came opportunely to the help of the scholar and took a most important part in the Revival of Learning. From Germany the printing presses crossed the Alps, and were soon at work turning out thousands of copies of the books in which the people of the time were taking such keen and absorbing interest. "In the last thirty years of the fifteenth century 10,000 editions of books and pamphlets are said to have been published throughout Europe—the most important half of them, of course, in Italy; and all the Latin authors were accessible to every student before it closed." Caxton, as we know, brought the new invention to our own country, and in the preface to one of the first books printed in England he contrasts the laborious work of the copyist with that of the printer. "In the writing," he says, "my pen is worn, my hand weary and not steadfast, my eyes dimmed with too much looking on the white paper. But all this is changed when a book is printed, for it may be begun in one day and finished in one day."

It was, however, only the scholars of Gutenberg's time who eagerly welcomed the new art. There were others, chiefly the copyists, whose work was now taken from them, who were bitterly hostile and looked upon the printer's work as witchcraft. From Strasburg, where he had secretly made a rude printing press, Gutenberg had to flee for his life, leaving the product of all his patient labour to be broken to pieces by the scribes and their friends. In his native city the first German printer set up a new press, and in or about 1457 his first printed book, a Latin version of the Psalms, was issued.



STATUE OF MOSES.—BY MICHAEL ANGELO.

(*Alinari.*)

Then Gutenberg commenced to print the Bible, assisted by a wealthy goldsmith named Fust, or Faust, and Peter Schoëffer, a designer. These two partners, it is said, did not behave very well to Gutenberg. Fust took possession of his press and his types when the printer was unable to return some money he had borrowed from the goldsmith, and Gutenberg was obliged to leave Mainz. He found a refuge and a patron in Nassau, where he once more set up a printing press, and was able to pursue his work in peace, undeterred by the hostility of those who honestly thought that he was in league with the devil.

CHAPTER XIII—THE ADVANCE OF SPAIN

A Retrospect.—In an earlier chapter we saw how the tribes of Arabia, fired by religious zeal and a desire for plunder, swept eastward, westward, and northward, and how at last they stood at the gates of Constantinople and at the Straits of Gibraltar ready to make an attempt to enter the European continent. At Constantinople they were beaten off, but in the south of Spain they conquered the Goths under Roderick, and in time founded a Mohammedan emirate or principality, with its capital at Cordova. Time passed, and there were many changes and divisions in the dominions of the Saracens. In the East the Turks overcame them, but adopted their faith, and when Constantinople fell in 1453 it was a

victory for Mohammedanism over Christianity. Not many years later, however, the Mohammedans of the south of Spain went down before the Christians, and thus in some degree the balance was redressed. Let us see how and by whom this was done.

The emirate of Cordova never included the mountainous regions of the north of Spain. Here the Christians founded several small states, which kept up a continual warfare against the Saracens. Little by little the followers of the prophet were driven southward, and in the eleventh century they held only the south-eastern corner of the peninsula which formed the kingdom of Granada and was ruled by Moorish princes from Northern Africa. Chief among the Christian states which accomplished this work were the principalities of Castile and Aragon, and among the heroes of the great struggle was the Cid, or Seid, or Signior, who holds in Spanish literature a place similar to that held by Arthur in the legends of early Britain. The real Cid was a Castilian prince named Rodrigue Diaz, and sober history gives no very favourable account of him. But literature tells another tale. In the *Poem of the Cid*, the *Chronicle of the Cid*, and in numerous ballads, he is lauded as a brave and chivalrous knight and leader, and has the usual equipment of an early hero, a wonderful horse, an enchanted sword, an arm that worked miracles of strength and dexterity.

Near the end of the fifteenth century Ferdinand, prince of Aragon, married Isabella, princess of Castile, and the two leading Christian states of Spain thus became united. The time of Ferdinand and Isabella was one of the most glorious periods of Spanish history, for these two rulers accomplished what the Christian

knights of the peninsula had never lost sight of—the reduction of the power of the Mohammedans.

The Conquest of Granada.—Ferdinand marched southward with a splendid army in the year 1491, determined to reduce the Moorish capital of Granada. The city was defended on the one side by a strong mountain barrier, the Sierra Nevada, and the other side, facing the vega or plain on which the Spaniards were encamped, was defended by walls and towers of great strength. Queen Isabella accompanied her husband, and we are told that she appeared on the field superbly mounted and dressed in complete armour, and went round the Spanish camp reviewing and encouraging the troops. Several skirmishes took place, but there was no immediate attempt on the part of the Spaniards to storm the Moorish stronghold. The place was strongly invested, and Ferdinand could afford to wait. One night the pavilion in which the queen and her daughters were lodged took fire, and the royal family were rescued from the flames with some difficulty. After this accident Ferdinand resolved to build stone houses for the accommodation of his force. His men were at once set to work, and in about three months there was a new city standing almost under the walls of Granada. This proof of the determination of the Spanish king did more to reduce the courage of Abdallah, the Moorish prince, than any amount of loss in actual warfare. He entered into secret negotiations with Ferdinand, and before long agreed to surrender the city. He obtained good terms for himself and his people.

On the morning appointed for the formal submission Ferdinand sent forward a strong detachment under Cardinal Mendoza to occupy the palace of the Alhambra and prepare to receive the Spanish sovereigns.

“As the column under the Grand Cardinal advanced up the hill he was met by the Moorish prince Abdallah, attended by fifty cavaliers who, descending the hill, rode up to the position occupied by Ferdinand. As the Moor approached the Spanish king he would have thrown himself from his horse and saluted his hand in token of homage, but Ferdinand hastily prevented him, embracing him with every mark of sympathy and regard. Abdallah then delivered up the keys of the Alhambra to his conqueror, saying, ‘They are thine, O king, since Allah so decrees it; use thy success with clemency and moderation.’ Ferdinand would have uttered some words of consolation, but the prince moved forward with a dejected air to the spot occupied by Isabella, and, after similar acts of obeisance, passed on to join his family, who had preceded him with his most valuable effects on the route to the Alpuxarras.

“The sovereigns during this time waited with impatience the signal of the occupation of the city by the cardinal’s troops. In a short time the large silver cross borne by Ferdinand throughout the crusade was seen sparkling in the sunbeams, while the Spanish standards waved triumphantly from the red towers of the Alhambra. At this glorious spectacle the choir of the royal chapel broke forth into the solemn anthem of the *Te Deum*, and the whole army, penetrated with deep emotion, prostrated themselves on their knees in adoration of the Lord of Hosts, who had at length granted the consummation of their wishes in this last and glorious triumph of the Cross.

“The grandees who surrounded Ferdinand then advanced towards the queen, and, kneeling down, saluted her hand in token of homage to her as sovereign of

Granada. The procession took up its march towards the city, 'the king and queen moving in their midst,' says a historian, 'emblazoned with royal magnificence; and, as they were in the prime of life and had now achieved the completion of this glorious conquest, they seemed to represent even more than their wonted majesty. Equal with each other, they were raised far above the rest of the world. They appeared, indeed, more than mortal, and as if sent by heaven for the salvation of Spain.'

"In the meanwhile the Moorish king reached a rocky eminence which commanded a last view of Granada. He checked his horse, and as his eye for the last time wandered over the scenes of his departed greatness, his heart swelled and he burst into tears. 'You do well,' said his more masculine mother, 'to weep like a woman for what you could not defend like a man!' 'Alas!' exclaimed the unhappy exile, 'when were woes equal to mine!' The scene of this event is still pointed out to the traveller, and the rocky height from which the Moorish chief took his sad farewell of the princely abodes of his youth is commemorated by the poetical title of 'The last Sigh of the Moor.'"

Thus ended the Mohammedan power in the Spanish peninsula about forty years after the fall of Constantinople. A later Spanish king, the Philip II. who sent the Armada against England, forbade the Moors of Granada the exercise of their religion and endeavoured to force Christianity upon them. They rebelled against him, and were put down with great cruelty. Under Philip III. most of them were expelled from the country, and Spain was finally freed from the hated presence of the infidels, losing at the same time, however, a large number of clever and industrious inhabitants.

Christopher Columbus.—It was to the court of Ferdinand and Isabella that Columbus came seeking means whereby he might set out on his great voyage of discovery.

One effect of the fall of Constantinople and the establishment of the Mohammedans in South-eastern Europe had been to cut off the merchants of Europe from access to India and other lands of Asia. At once attempts were made to find a sea route to Asia. Portugal led the way, sending several expeditions along the west coast of Africa with the object of finding a passage to India round the southernmost point of the Dark Continent. In 1487 Bartholomew Diaz succeeded in doubling the Cape of Storms, which was renamed the Cape of Good Hope because the possibility of finding an ocean route to India seemed now to be assured. Ten years later another Portuguese navigator, Vasco da Gama, doubled the Cape, sailed across the Indian Ocean, and landed on the Malabar coast. The route had been found at last, but meanwhile Columbus had been trying to find a shorter route to the coast of Asia, and had found a new world instead.

This great man—great in patience as well as in courage—believed that the earth was a sphere, but he did not think that it was so large as it really is. He thought that there were but three continents, and that the distance between the eastern shores of Asia and the western coasts of Europe and Africa was less than five thousand miles. He would make for the Canary Islands, and then sail almost due west to the coast of Asia. Such a route would be much better than the long and dangerous voyage round Africa, for it would be almost a straight line, and would save about eight thousand miles. He had no thought of discovering a new world. He was

going "to explore the east by the west, and to pass by way of the west to the land whence come the spices."

In Lisbon, in Genoa, and in Venice, Columbus tried to persuade those who had the means to supply him with ships and men for his voyage, but he met with no success. At last he gained admittance to Ferdinand and Isabella, who listened to him, but were persuaded at first to have no dealings with the navigator. The thing was absurd, said some of the advisers of the royal pair, and contrary to the teaching of the Bible. "Besides," these men wisely asked, "if any one should ever succeed in descending into the other hemisphere, how could he ever mount up again into this one?"

Columbus did not despair. For several years he worked and hoped, and at last Ferdinand agreed to furnish him with ships. The leader of the expedition was appointed viceroy and governor of the lands which he was going to add to the Spanish dominions, and was to obtain one tithe of the gold, silver, precious stones, and spices to be found in them. Three small wooden ships or caravels, the *Santa Maria*, the *Pinta*, and the *Nina*, were provided, crews were found with great difficulty, and on the morning of Friday, 3rd August 1492, Columbus set sail from the Spanish port of Palos, rejoicing in the firm conviction that he was "an agent chosen by heaven to accomplish a grand design."

The admiral, as he was called, had no small trouble with the men under his command. "Are there no graves in Spain," they asked, "that you should bring us here to perish?" when day after day passed and no land was sighted. On the 10th of October the men refused to go any farther. But Columbus prevailed upon them to do their duty in working the ships. He cheered them as

much by his demeanour as by his words. His own confidence inspired hope in the breasts of his followers, who had not long to wait before the firm faith of their leader was justified. In the early morning of the 12th land was sighted by the sailor on the look-out of the *Pinta*. With the first streak of dawn the voyagers saw a small island about six miles away. It was one of the Bahama group, as we now know, but Columbus thought that it lay off the eastern coast of Asia, and that he had in reality "passed by way of the west to the land whence come the spices."

Figures of naked savages were now seen upon the shore of the island, and preparations were made to effect a landing. Columbus left his ship, the *Santa Maria*, in the long boat and was rowed to the beach. He stepped out, carrying in his hand the royal banner of Spain, and solemnly took possession of the island in the name of his royal master and mistress. Meanwhile the natives looked on with wondering eyes at the strangers who appeared to them to have fallen from the skies. Then they came forward timidly and touched the garments of the Spaniards with their fingers, as though to test the reality of their presence. Columbus "used mildness," as he says, in speaking to them, and gave them presents of coloured caps and glass beads, whereupon "they showed great joy and so much gratitude that we marvelled greatly at it. When we were re-embarking," adds the explorer, "they swam towards us to offer us parroquets, balls of cotton thread, long darts, and many other things; in exchange we gave them some small glass beads, little bells, and other objects. They gave us all they had, but they appeared to me to be very poor. . . . They were well made, their figures handsome, and their faces agree-

able. Their coarse hair hung down in front as low as their eyebrows; behind it formed a long mass which was never cut. There are some who paint themselves with a black pigment, their natural colour being neither black nor white, but similar to that of the people of the Canary Islands; some paint themselves with white, some with red or any other colour. They do not carry arms like our people, and do not even know what they are. When I showed them some swords they laid hold of them by the blades and cut their fingers."

Columbus gave the name of San Salvador to the island upon which he had first landed. After cruising among the West Indies and discovering among others the large islands of Cuba and Hispaniola, he sailed for Spain. He landed at Lisbon and then proceeded to the royal court at Barcelona. Ferdinand and Isabella received him with great respect, and even stood up to bid him welcome—no mean honour. The admiral presented specimens of the gold and other products of the new lands beyond the sea. He had also brought with him a few of the natives, who must have been deeply impressed by the grandeur of the court of the Spanish monarchs.

In subsequent voyages Columbus reached the mainland of Central and South America, which he still believed to be the eastern portion of Asia. He fell into disfavour in his later days, was deposed from his command in Hispaniola, and even sent to Spain in chains. After making another westward voyage, on which he suffered many disasters, he returned to end his days in poverty and neglect. Queen Isabella, his generous patron and protector, was dead, and Ferdinand, jealous and ungrateful, lent a ready ear to the enemies of the great admiral and discoverer, who died at Valladolid at the age of seventy,

worn out by constant toil and anxiety, crushed and heart-broken by the cold ingratitude of a prince to whose reign he had added such undying lustre.

Amerigo Vespucci. — Not long before his death Columbus said to his brother, "I have established all that I have proposed—the existence of land in the west. I have opened the gate, and others may enter at their pleasure, as indeed they do, claiming for themselves the title of discoverers, to which they can have little claim, following as they do in my track."

Among the many who followed in the track of Columbus was a native of Florence named Amerigo Vespucci, or, in Latin, *Americus Vespucius*. He made three voyages to South America, and afterwards wrote a short account of them. A copy of this account, it is said, fell into the hands of a teacher in a college not far from Strasburg. He was writing an *Introduction to Geography* for the use of his pupils, and in this work he wrote: "The fourth part of the world having been discovered by Americus, it may be called the land of Americus or America." The new and misleading name was at once adopted for the southern part of the New World, and afterwards applied also to the northern portion. Thus the great western continent goes by the name of a man who has no claim to be called its discoverer, though we must note that he himself did not make any such claim. His suggestion was that the land in the west should be known simply as the New World.

Ferdinand Magellan.—We have already seen that Portugal was very active in searching for a sea route to India, but that she confined her efforts to hugging the coast of Africa. Both Spain and Portugal regarded the discoveries of their navigators as means of increasing

their wealth, and there was keen rivalry between the two countries. When Columbus returned from his first voyage this conflict of interests was increased, and in order to adjust it the pope hit upon the following plan. He divided the world into two portions by a meridian drawn through the Atlantic and cutting off the easternmost portion of South America. Then he decreed, as lord of the world, that all lands to the west of this line not already belonging to a Christian prince should belong to Spain, and those to the east to Portugal. This gave to Spain the whole of North America, and sent the Portuguese navigators eastward to the rich islands of South-eastern Asia. Before long, however, disputes arose, as might have been expected, concerning the right to lands found by Spaniards in sailing westward and also reached by the Portuguese in sailing eastward.

In 1519 Charles V., the King of Spain, and grandson of Ferdinand, sent out an expedition to the westward with the object of reaching and claiming the rich Molucca Islands off the south-east of Asia. This undertaking was entrusted to Ferdinand Magellan, a Portuguese navigator who had left the service of his own country and enlisted in that of her rival. This bold sailor steered across the Atlantic to the south-west, passed through the strait which now bears his name, and called the great ocean upon which he emerged the Pacific, possibly because its waters were peaceful compared with those of the stormy straits which he had just passed in safety. On he went to the westward, and at last reached the Spice Islands, thus establishing the claim of Spain to their possession according to the rule laid down by the pope. Then he set out on the return journey, still sailing westward, but he was not permitted to see the

accomplishment of the first voyage round the world. The dauntless sailor was killed, it is said, by the natives of one of the islands of the Pacific, though others assert that he met his death at the hands of his mutinous sailors. His ships were brought home by his chief officer, who received from the Spanish king the rewards which would have been given to Magellan, to whom belongs the honour of having first circumnavigated the globe.

Charles the Fifth, King of Spain and Emperor.—It is not within the scope of this book to tell of the wonderful adventures of the many travellers who journeyed westward to the land to which Columbus led the way, nor of the founding of that Spanish colonial empire in America which enriched the kingdom of Ferdinand and Isabella and helped to raise it to the foremost position in Europe.¹ Before the death of Ferdinand the whole of the Spanish peninsula, with the exception of Portugal, was united into one kingdom. This great sovereign was also ruler of Sicily and Sardinia, and in 1504 conquered the kingdom of Naples. He was succeeded by his grandson, Charles, who was also elected emperor, with the title of Charles the Fifth, on the death of his other grandfather, the Emperor Maximilian. Charles also ruled the Netherlands² and the county of Burgundy, to the east of France. The emperor thus became once more the greatest sovereign in Europe, not, however, because he was emperor, but because he held in his own right Spain and her colonial possessions, Austria, the

¹ The reader is referred to W. H. Prescott's *Ferdinand and Isabella, Conquest of Mexico, and Conquest of Peru*.

² Also called the Low Countries, which at that time almost corresponded to the present kingdoms of Holland and Belgium together.

Netherlands, Sardinia, Sicily, and the southern part of Italy. He was crowned as head of the Holy Roman Empire, not at Rome but at Bologna.

Great as he was, so far as the possession of territory could make him great, "Charles's ambition was insatiable, and his desire of being distinguished as a conqueror involved him in continual wars, which not only exhausted and oppressed his subjects, but left him little leisure for giving attention to the interior government and improvement of his kingdom, the great objects of every prince who makes the happiness of his people the end of his government."

Four times he went to war with King Francis I. of France, the monarch who met Henry VIII. of England on the Field of the Cloth of Gold. In the first of these wars Francis lost one of his bravest leaders, the Chevalier Bayard, of whom we read in our chapter on the Age of Chivalry,—the knight "without fear and without reproach,"—who conferred upon his sovereign the honour of knighthood. In one engagement against the Spaniards he held a bridge, single-handed, against two hundred men, and when, in another battle with the same foes, he met his death, his body was rendered up to his troops with all reverence and courtesy. "Do not pity me," he had said to one who found him lying mortally wounded on the field of battle with his face turned towards the foe, "since I die as a man should."

Of the great Protestant movement in Germany, which began in the reign of Charles V., we shall read in another chapter. His reign ended strangely and sadly. Of his own free will he resigned the empire and gave up his hereditary possessions to his son Philip. Then he retired to a monastery in Spain, where he spent the

remaining two years of his life in the exercises of religion, watching keenly, however, the current of events in the outer world, in which he had held such an exalted position. With the abdication of Charles, Spain was separated from the empire, for the electors did not choose Philip as emperor. Spain was, however, still the chief power in the world, and her greatness may truly be described as the legacy of Ferdinand and Isabella.

CHAPTER XIV—THE NEW LEARNING IN THE NORTH

The Scholars of the North.—Although Italy was the centre of learning and the arts in the fifteenth century, there were also scholars of repute north of the Alps. Many of these obtained their knowledge of the Greek language and literature by making the journey to Florence, and there attending the lectures of the men who had fled before the advance of the Turks upon Constantinople. From England came Colet, afterwards Dean of St. Paul's, and founder of the cathedral school; Grocyn, a student and teacher of Oxford; and Linacre, who became a famous scientist and physician. These men and many others of less eminence studied for some time in Florence, and on their return they made Oxford the centre of Greek learning in England. To their lectures came a young scholar from Paris who had heard of the fame of the Oxford teachers, and who was unable to get to Italy and there obtain the Greek learning for which he longed with the deep enthusiasm of a true student. This

was Erasmus, a native of Rotterdam, who, after spending some years as a monk, had made his way to Paris, where he supported himself by giving private lectures to the students of the ancient university of that city. "I have given my whole soul to Greek learning," he writes, "and as soon as I get any money I shall buy Greek books, and then I shall buy some clothes."

He became the pupil and friend of Colet and of Sir Thomas More, another famous scholar of the time, and one of the most fascinating figures in English history. After a time he left England and visited many of the centres of learning on the Continent. He studied and taught at Turin and Bologna, at Venice and Padua, and at Rome, where he had offers to settle. But our King Henry VIII. invited him to England, and he became a professor at Cambridge. The last years of his life were spent at Basel, which counts as one of its richest treasures the portrait of the great scholar which was painted by Holbein, and now hangs in the museum of the city.

Now let us note an important difference between the scholars of Italy and the greater number of those who studied and taught in the university towns north of the Alps. The learned men of Florence and other Italian cities studied the works of the ancient Greek and Latin writers because they saw in them models of what poems and stories and histories ought to be, and they tried to write like these old masters of poetry and prose. But most of the scholars north of the Alps used the new learning to find out all they could about religion, especially from the New Testament. To Colet the language of ancient Greece was the "key wherewith he might unlock the Gospels," and he bent all his energies

to the study of the New Testament in the language in which it was first written. Erasmus spent many long and laborious days in making an edition of the Greek



Testament which should contain the true and correct version of the Gospels as obtained from the old manuscripts. And he had a burning desire to spread abroad a knowledge of the contents of this book. "I wish," he writes, "that even the weakest woman might read the

Gospels and the Epistles of Saint Paul. . . . I long for the day when the husbandman shall sing portions of them to himself as he follows the plough, when the weaver shall hum them to the time of his shuttle, when the traveller shall while away with their stories the weariness of his journey." Of course, before this could happen the New Testament would have to be placed in the hands of the husbandman or the weaver in the language which he spoke. But the Greek Testament of Erasmus was to take the first step towards bringing this about. Other scholars would turn the story of the Gospels into the various languages of the people of Northern Europe, using his work as the basis of their own.

We see then that, generally speaking, the southern scholars worshipped Greek learning for its own sake; but the scholars of the north used it as a means of finding out more about the truths of religion. And the Revival of Learning in the north of Europe thus brought about a great religious movement, which is known as the Reformation, and led to the separation of large numbers of people from the Church of which the Bishop of Rome was the head. With the nature of the religious disputes of the great movement we have nothing to do, but we cannot hope to understand the course of European history of the time unless we learn something of Luther and the German Protestants, of Calvin and the French Huguenots.

The Prelude of the Reformation.—In the beginning of the fifteenth century, about a hundred years before the time of Luther, there was in the University of Prague a professor named John Huss, who might be described as the German Wyclif. Like the reformer of whom we

read in our own history, Huss objected to the wealth and condemned the worldly life of many of the clergy, and he also taught religious doctrines which were in opposition to those of the Church of Rome. Huss was cut off from the Church by excommunication, and was summoned to trial before a council at Constance, presided over by the Emperor Sigismund.

There he was given a choice between instantly denying all that he held to be true or being burnt to death as a heretic. Huss chose to die for his opinions, and a few days later was burnt at the stake. But the teaching of the professor of Prague had gained many converts, and before long the Hussites, who were chiefly Bohemians, rose against the emperor. They were led by John Ziska, a one-eyed man who had been a friend of Huss and had eagerly adopted his teaching. Under this leader, who had a rare talent for conducting military operations, the Hussites laid waste some of the fairest provinces of Germany. They besieged towns, stormed castles, and butchered the people without mercy. In an engagement Ziska's one eye was injured by an arrow and he became quite blind. But his energy was in no wise abated. He still conducted the fearful campaign, forcing his troops to march night and day till many of them murmured. "Spare us," they cried; "though night and day are the same to you they are not so to us." "How!" replied Ziska, "you cannot see? Then fire the villages on the way and walk by the blaze they give."

In time the Hussites quarrelled among themselves and split up into two parties, and the war, which lasted fifteen years, came to an end by one party uniting with the enemy and so suppressing the other. Huss stands, like Wyclif, at the dawn of the Reformation—a lurid

dawn to a day of blood, when men on both sides of the great religious struggle fought and slew, burnt and butchered "for the glory of the Lord."

Martin Luther.—The hero of the German Reformation was Martin Luther. He was the son of a miner, "born poor and brought up poor—one of the poorest of men. He had to beg, as the school children of those times did, singing for alms and bread from door to door." Then when he grew up he became a friar, and later a professor at the University of Wittenberg, a small town in Central Germany, which he was to render famous throughout the world.

He turned his mind to questions of doctrine, and soon found himself at variance with the Church of his time. A timid man, with the example of Huss before him, would have remained silent. But Luther was a fighter and absolutely without fear. He openly taught what he believed to be true, and one day fastened upon the door of the castle church in Wittenberg a paper containing his ideas on the belief and practice of the Church. The pope at once sent to Wittenberg a bull or decree excommunicating the bold friar, cutting him off from the society of Christians, and ordering all true believers to arrest him and put a stop to his teaching. This bull was publicly burnt by Luther near one of the gates of Wittenberg as a sign of the contempt in which he held the pope and his authority.

Then the sturdy friar was summoned to the emperor's Diet at Worms to answer the charge of heresy. "The Diet of Worms," writes Carlyle, "and Luther's appearance there on the 17th of April 1521, may be considered as the greatest scene in modern European history. After multiplied negotiations, disputations, it had come to this.

The young emperor, Charles the Fifth, with all the princes of Germany, are assembled there; Luther is to appear and answer for himself whether he will recant or not. The world's pomp and power sit there on this hand; on that stands up one man, the poor miner Hans Luther's son. Friends had reminded him of Huss, advised him not to go; he would not be advised. A large company of friends rode out to meet him with still more earnest warnings; he answered, 'Were there as many devils in Worms as there are roof tiles I would on.'"

Luther had, however, several friends among the German princes who attended the Diet. Some of them were really sharers of his religious views, while others opposed the pope as the constant enemy of the empire and of Germany. But powerful as these friends were, they could not prevent the condemnation of Luther, who was placed under the ban of the empire—that is, he was named a heretic and an outlaw. Charles the Fifth had, however, promised him safe conduct to and from Worms, and the reformer left the place under an imperial guard. Luther travelled in an open waggon through the Thuringian Forest, and on his way was seized by four masked knights, who carried him off to the castle of the Wartburg. These knights had been sent by the Elector of Saxony, Luther's chief supporter, and their purpose was to protect the reformer from the vengeance of his enemies, which would fall upon him as soon as the emperor's promise of safe conduct home had been performed.

In the Wartburg-castle Luther lived for about a year. To disarm suspicion and prevent discovery, he dressed as a knight, wore a breastplate and helmet, allowed his beard to grow, and in this manner was effectively disguised.

He at last reappeared among his followers and used his great influence to check their tendency to imitate the Hussites. The dreadful Peasants' War, which broke out in 1524, and lasted for two years, is said to have been caused partly by the spread of the new doctrines. But Luther had no sympathy with the furious outbreak against the nobles, and called upon them to "strangle and stab the rebels as a man would treat a mad dog."

The last two years of Luther's active life were spent in preaching, teaching, and writing. He was protected by powerful friends, and he lived to see his religious ideas take deep root in Germany. As a scholar he is best remembered for his translation of the Bible into German, which he accomplished with the help of several friends. This great work was carefully carried out, and the Bible of Luther is considered to have fixed the language of Germany at a time when the Germans spoke several different dialects. Luther died in 1546, one year before the death of our King Henry VIII., who received from the pope the title of Defender of the Faith for writing a book against the teaching of the great German reformer. Those who followed Luther's teaching came to be known as Protestants, while the opposite party were called Roman Catholics, or simply Catholics.

John Calvin.—The Reformation movement in France was set afoot by John Calvin, who studied at the University of Paris, whence he was forced to fly because of his religious beliefs, which differed not only from the Church of his day but also from those of Luther. Calvin, after spending some time in various towns, finally took refuge at Geneva, which he made the centre of the Reformed faith. He was a man of greater learning than Martin Luther, but of a very different character. Like

his friend John Knox, he was harsh and austere, partly from nature, partly because he thought that the time in which he lived and the purpose of his life demanded sternness. His teaching soon spread far and wide, and his converts rapidly increased in numbers. "The Huguenots of France," writes a historian, "the Covenanters of Scotland, the Puritans of England, and the Pilgrim Fathers of New England, were all the offspring of Calvinism." We know how prominent a part was played in our own history by the Puritans, and we have heard of the Covenanters; we know also how the Pilgrim Fathers helped to found a new and a great nation in the land to which Columbus led the way. Let us now learn a little about the Huguenots and see what part they played in the history of France.

The Huguenots of France.—The French followers of Calvin called themselves Reformed or Reformers, and were nicknamed Huguenots by the Catholics of France. The derivation of the word is uncertain, but it is supposed to be connected with the German *Eidgenossen*, *i.e.* oath comrades or covenanters. The Huguenots were cruelly persecuted under the French king, Francis I., in whose reign numbers of the Vaudois, an inoffensive and industrious people of the south-east of France, were massacred without mercy. His successor, Henry II., married Catherine de Medici, a relative of the pope, and one of the family of which we have heard in connection with Florence. Catherine was resolute, cruel, and unscrupulous, filled with ambition, and capable of using any means to attain her ends. Her son, Francis II., came to the throne at the age of fifteen, and during his short reign of less than two years the queen-mother and the French family of the Guises gradually

obtained the chief power in the kingdom. Their rivals were the Bourbons, another French noble family whose chiefs were the King of Navarre and his brother, Prince Conde. The Bourbons were descended from Saint Louis of France, and were next heirs to the French crown in case the young king and his brothers died without leaving any successors. They took the Huguenots under their protection, while the Guises and Catherine de Medici were the champions of the Catholics.

The real leader of the Huguenots was Admiral Coligny, one of the best, bravest, and most sincere men of his age. Under Francis II., or rather under the queen-mother and the Guises, the French Protestants were treated with great severity. Many of them were burnt or hung to provide an after-dinner entertainment for the young king and his beautiful queen, Mary Stuart, who was afterwards to meet her death at the hands of her cousin, Elizabeth of England. Meanwhile the Bourbons plotted to overthrow the Guises and get the king and queen into their own hands, but all to no purpose. Francis died in 1560, and was succeeded by his younger brother, Charles IX., then a boy of eleven. Catherine became regent, and was really ruler of the kingdom. At first she tried to bring about a reconciliation between Catholics and Protestants, probably to gain time for perfecting her plans. To a certain extent she was successful, but before long a civil war broke out, which lasted for several years and was marked by ferocious acts of cruelty on both sides. Spain helped the Catholics and England helped the Huguenots, and France was once more laid waste with fire and sword. At first the Huguenots under Conde and Coligny obtained considerable success, and after a time Catherine offered terms of peace, which were accepted.

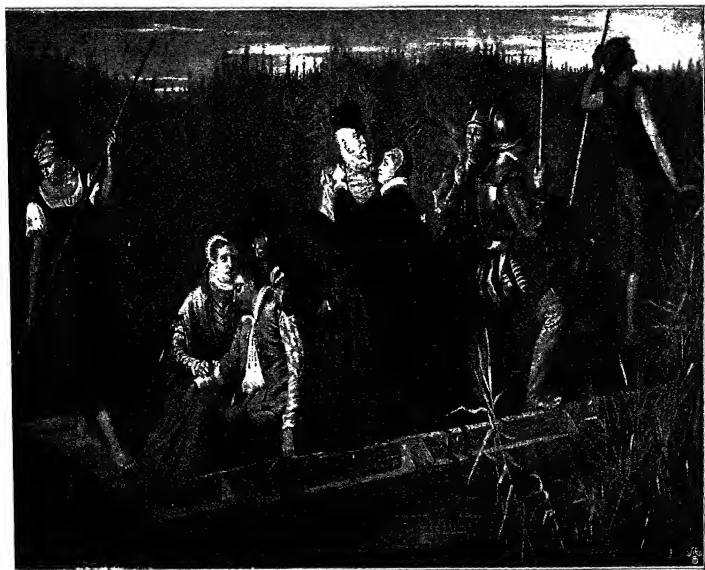
But before long war was once more raging. The Huguenots lost their leader, Prince Conde, and were beginning to despair when they were rallied by the heroic Jeanne of Navarre, who brought her young son, Prince Henry, into the field as a Huguenot leader, and gave all that she had of worldly wealth to help the cause of the Protestants. In 1570 peace was concluded. The Huguenots were allowed the exercise of their own form of religion, all employments were thrown open to them, and they were given four fortified towns, one of which was La Rochelle, on the west coast of France.

When Charles IX. came of age he made an attempt to escape from his mother's influence and to rule for himself. He arranged a marriage between his sister Marguerite and Henry of Navarre, hoping thereby to gain the support of the Huguenots. Jeanne of Navarre went to Paris to consult with Catherine about the marriage. There she died suddenly and mysteriously, and rumour said that her death had been the work of the queen-mother. Henry prepared to go to Paris, and most of the leading Huguenots were to attend him. But there were misgivings among them. "If that wedding comes off," said one, "the favours will be crimson." Coligny was warned not to trust himself within the stronghold of his enemies, but he earnestly longed for a settlement of the national quarrels in order that France might present a united front to her enemies abroad. So he went to Paris and, as it proved, to his death.

The Massacre of Saint Bartholomew, 1572. — The marriage took place, though the bride had to be forced by the king to take her share in the ceremony. Then trouble began. Catherine hired an assassin to murder Coligny because she feared the influence the admiral was

obtaining over the king. The assassin only wounded Coligny, and Charles swore to take vengeance upon those who had hatched the plot. But Catherine was too strong for him. She had resolved to deal a terrible blow at the Protestants, and at once. She went to the king and laid her plan before him, which was nothing less than a wholesale massacre of the Huguenots in Paris on a certain fixed day. The king was struck with horror, but was at last driven by threats and persuasions to give his consent. "I agree," said he at last, "provided that you do not leave a Huguenot alive in France to reproach me."

In the early morning of Saint Bartholomew's Day, 24th August 1572, a bell of a Parisian church began to toll, and was at once answered by the bells of other churches throughout the city. This was the signal for beginning the appointed work. Armed men, wearing white scarves on their left arms and white crosses on their caps, rushed into the streets and made rapidly for the houses where Huguenots were known to be. There they fell upon the Protestants and slaughtered men, women, and children without mercy. Coligny met his death like a brave man. "Are you the admiral?" asked one who wore the white badges. "I am," answered Coligny, "and you, young man, should respect my gray head. But do your work. You will only shorten my life a little." Then he fell, stabbed to the heart, and his body was thrown from the house where he lodged into the street to be insulted by the mob. For three days the awful work went on, and the fury spread to many towns in the provinces, which imitated the example of the capital. Henry of Navarre escaped death by promising to turn Catholic, but afterwards disregarded a promise made under compulsion.



ESCAPE OF A HUGUENOT FAMILY.—E. S. KENNEDY.

But the Huguenots were not stamped out. They took refuge in their fortified cities, and civil war broke out once more. Charles died at the early age of twenty-four, filled with remorse for the terrible deed he had sanctioned. He was followed by Henry III., who ordered all Protestants to leave the kingdom, and continued the struggle for some time. Afterwards, however, he became the ally of Henry of Navarre, and on his deathbed, after a reign of fifteen years, he commended the Huguenot leader to his counsellors as their king.

Henry IV. of Navarre.—The first Bourbon king of France did not secure the throne without a struggle, but the decisive victory gained at Ivry in Normandy in 1589 turned the scale in his favour. Macaulay tells the story of the battle in stirring verse, putting his account into the mouth of one of Henry's men-at-arms.

The King has come to marshal us, in all his armour drest,
And he has bound a snow-white plume upon his gallant crest.
He looked upon his people, and a tear was in his eye ;
He looked upon the traitors, and his glance was stern and high.
Right graciously he smiled on us, as rolled from wing to wing,
Down all our line, a deafening shout, "God save our Lord the
King!"

"And if my standard-bearer fall, as fall full well he may,
For never saw I promise yet of such a bloody fray,
Press where ye see my white plume shine, amidst the ranks of
war,
And be your oriflamme to-day the helmet of Navarre."

Hurrah ! the foes are moving. Hark to the mingled din
Of fife, and steed, and trumpet, and drum, and roaring culverin.

A thousand spurs are striking deep, a thousand spears in rest,
A thousand knights are pressing close behind the snow-white
crest :

And in they burst, and on they rushed, while, like a guiding star, Amidst the thickest carnage blazed the helmet of Navarre.

Then there followed a siege of Paris, during which Henry became a Catholic, without, however, forfeiting the support of the Huguenots. The gates of Paris were now opened to the new king, who, supported by both parties, brought peace and quiet breathing to the disturbed land of France. He published the famous Edict of Nantes, which gave religious liberty to the Huguenots, and before his death, at the hands of an assassin, he had earned the title of "Father of his Country."

CHAPTER XV—THE ADVANCE OF HOLLAND

The Netherlands, or the Low Countries.—When we speak of the Netherlands at the present day we mean the country of Holland. But in the fifteenth century the name had a wider meaning. The Netherlands, or the Low Countries, as they were sometimes called, then included almost the whole of the present Holland and Belgium, in addition to part of the north-east of France. The country contained a large number of rich and important trading cities, and was ruled by the House of Burgundy, of whom we read in our chapter about the Hundred Years' War. The Low Countries lay partly within the empire and partly within France, so that the dukes of Burgundy were at that time vassals at once of the emperor and of the French king.

In the latter part of the fifteenth century a duke of Burgundy named Charles the Bold made an attempt to set up a middle kingdom between France and Germany of which he should be the head. He already had the Netherlands and his own duchy of Burgundy, and he wished to take in the Swiss Confederation. But at the battle of Morat in 1476 the Confederates defeated him severely, and the scheme of setting up again the old state of Lotharingia (see Chapter III.) fell to the ground. The duchy of Burgundy became part of France, while the Netherlands and a small state called the county of Burgundy passed to Mary, the daughter of Charles the Bold. It was through this princess that Charles V., king of Spain, and head of the Holy Roman Empire, became possessed of the Netherlands, and when he died they remained part of the Spanish dominions.

They were a possession of great value, and Charles V. soon made an attempt to make rich profit out of the wealthy Netherland cities which carried on most of the trade of Northern Europe. He claimed heavy tribute from them, which many of the towns refused to pay. They had purchased charters of liberty from the nobles who had ruled the land in former days, and when the Netherlands passed to Spain most of the cities were in reality small republics, like those of Northern Italy, of which we have read. But Charles marched to Ghent with an army, beheaded several of the rulers of the city, took away its charters of liberty, and forced the citizens not only to pay the imposed tax but an enormous fine as well. By similar measures he awed the rest of the Netherlands into submission to his will.

He also introduced the Inquisition into the country,



THE APPROACH TO VENICE,—J. M. W. TURNER.

and set to work to stamp out heresy. The northern portion of the Netherlands was German, and contained many Protestants. Charles had been unable to suppress the followers of Luther in Germany itself, but in this part of his dominions he was able to give full play to the Inquisitors, who did their work only too well. The thumb-screw, the rack, the stake, and the scaffold, claimed countless victims, and the people of the Northern Netherlands contributed a full share of the martyrs of the Reformation, who refused to purchase life and safety by a denial of the beliefs which they held to be true.

It was at the city of Brussels, in the Southern Netherlands, where most of the people were Catholics, that Charles handed over to his son Philip the government of the Netherlands before making his retirement to the monastery in which he ended his days. The emperor attended a meeting of the estates of the Netherlands, and there presented their new ruler to the leading men of the country. After a speech by one of the nobles, "the emperor rose to his feet. Leaning on his crutch, he beckoned from his seat the person upon whose arm he had leaned as he entered the hall. A tall handsome youth of twenty-two came forward—a man whose name from that time forward, and as long as history shall endure, has been, and will be, more familiar than any other in the mouths of Netherlanders. . . . He had a Spanish cast of features, dark, well-chiselled, and symmetrical. His head was small and well placed upon his shoulders. His hair was dark brown, as were also his moustache and peaked beard. His forehead was lofty, spacious, and already prematurely engraved with the anxious lines of thought. His eyes were full, brown,

well opened, and expressive of profound reflection. He was dressed in the magnificent apparel for which the Netherlands were celebrated above all other nations, and which the ceremony rendered necessary."

The young man who is thus described by a well-known historian, and upon whose shoulder the old emperor leaned as he read his speech to the estates, was William, Prince of Orange, known in history as William the Silent, one of the leading nobles of the Netherlands, who had been summoned from his post in command on the frontier, where he was engaged in military operations against the French. He saw the old monarch take an affecting leave of his nobles and give place to his son Philip, who, like William of Orange, was then in the prime of life and the vigour of health. But he did not know that the day was coming when he was to stand as the champion of the Netherlands against the new sovereign, and to engage with him in a deadly struggle, which forms one of the most memorable episodes in the history of Europe.

The Netherlands under Philip II.—We are already acquainted with Philip II. of Spain. He was the husband of Mary Tudor, Queen of England; he sent against our country the Invincible Armada; he was the king of Spain whose "beard was singed" by our dauntless Admiral Drake in the harbour of Cadiz.

For about four years the new sovereign remained in the Netherlands, engaged chiefly in the work upon which his heart was set—the stamping out of heresy. His hatred of the Dutch Protestants was even greater than that of his father, and he gave full power to the Inquisition to carry on the work which had been begun under Charles V. Let us remember, however, that he

was sincere. He believed most firmly that he was doing the work of God in hunting Protestants to death. "How can you thus look on and allow me to be burned?" asked one of his victims. "I would carry the wood to burn my own son were he as wicked as you," was the answer.

When Philip left the country for Spain he made Margaret, the Duchess of Parma, regent of the Netherlands, and took care to leave with her counsellors who would carry on his work in his own way. Before long the nobles of the Low Countries banded together in support of the persecuted Protestants, and also in protest against acts of misgovernment on the part of the king's representatives. Their first step was to petition the regent for a settlement of their grievances, but the government gave them small satisfaction. Then the people broke out into revolt, and revenged themselves by breaking the images and ruthlessly destroying many beautiful works of art in the churches and chapels. These riots of the iconoclasts, or image breakers, had the effect of terrifying Margaret, who went so far as to ask Philip to grant liberty of worship to the Protestants and to abolish the Inquisition. Philip appeared to give way. He would pardon the rebels, he wrote, withdraw the officers of the Inquisition, and relax the laws against the Protestants. This appeared to be a victory for the people of the Netherlands. But their triumph was short-lived.

The next year Philip displaced the Regent Margaret by the Duke of Alva, to whom he gave a large army of Spanish veterans for the work in prospect—that of bringing the Netherlands into complete subjection. Alva was one of the best generals of the time. "In

person he was tall, thin, erect, with a small head, a long visage, lean yellow cheek, dark twinkling eyes, black bristling hair, and a long sable-silvered beard, descending in two waving streams upon his breast." In character he was cruel and merciless, harsh and unbending, and he had won for himself a name which was already feared and detested throughout the Netherlands. He came with his army of well-tried soldiers as a conqueror and not as a governor, and he was confident that the success of his master's work was safe in his terrible hands. "I have tamed people of iron in my day," he said in supreme contempt of the merchants of the north; "shall I not easily crush these men of butter?"

Alva organised a council of state, which became known as the Council of Blood, and with this instrument he commenced his relentless rule. The Inquisition was once more established, and wholesale executions took place. "The whole country became a charnel-house; the death-bell tolled hourly in every village; not a family but was called to mourn for its dearest relatives, while the survivors stalked listlessly about, the ghosts of their former selves, among the wrecks of their former homes. The spirit of the nation, within a few months after the arrival of Alva, seemed hopelessly broken. The blood of its best and bravest had already stained the scaffold; the men to whom it had been accustomed to look for guidance and protection were dead, in prison, or in exile. Submission had ceased to be of any avail, flight was impossible, and the spirit of vengeance had alighted at every fireside."

There was, however, one leader in exile who was busily preparing for the work of rescuing the Netherlands from the tyranny of Alva. This was William of

Orange, who, on the approach of Alva and his army, had gone to Germany, and there raised an army of some 30,000 men.

The Revolt of the Netherlands.—In the year 1568 the great struggle began, and it continued for thirty-seven years. It ended in victory for the Netherlands, though William of Orange was opposed in succession by some of the ablest generals who have ever been placed at the head of an army; by the famous Alva himself, whose genius for command none can deny; by Don John of Austria, who reaped his first laurels in a victorious and cruel campaign against the Moors of Granada; by the Duke of Parma, who at Lepanto boarded a Turkish treasure-ship single-handed, and hewed a path through his enemies with his huge two-handed sword, which, like that of Wallace, was “fit for archangel to wield.” There were battles and sieges almost without number, and feats of prodigious valour were performed on both sides during the long struggle. We shall not attempt to deal in detail with the events of the great contest. Let us look, however, at one event in the war which well exhibits the determination of the Netherlanders to win their freedom or perish in the struggle.

The Siege of Leyden.—Alva laid siege to the beautiful city of Leyden in 1573, but during the investment of the place he asked to be relieved of his position as the Spanish governor in the Low Countries. He was tired of the work and cast down at the failure of his methods. “The hatred which the people bear me,” he wrote to his royal master, “because of the chastisement which it has been necessary for me to inflict, although with all the moderation in the world, makes all my efforts vain. A successor will meet more sympathy and prove more

useful." King Philip complied with the desire of his lieutenant, who was replaced by Requesens, who has been described as "a man of high position by birth and office, but a thoroughly commonplace personage."

The siege of Leyden was continued. The Spaniards were under the command of a general named Valdez, and the place was completely invested. There were only a few soldiers within the city, but the hearts of the burghers were stout and true, and they relied upon the resourceful energy of William of Orange, who was doing his best to bring relief. The prince sent messengers into Leyden bidding the people to take courage, and asking them to hold out for three months at least. Before long he hoped to devise and execute some plan for their deliverance. He reminded them that they were contending not for themselves alone, but that the fate of their country depended upon their endurance. "As long as there is a living man left in the country," he said, "we will fight for our liberty."

The prince found it impossible to collect a force large enough to cope with that of Valdez. He therefore devised a daring plan for outwitting the Spaniards. This was to cut the dykes along the Meuse and Yssel and to open the sluices at Rotterdam and Schiedam so as to allow the ocean to flood the fields round Leyden. Then it might be possible to approach the city by water and to bring relief to the inhabitants, many of whom were now suffering the agonies of slow starvation.

This plan was actually carried out, though the damage to the fields, villages, and growing crops was enormous. The dykes were ruptured in sixteen places and the sluice gates were opened. The water rushed in and flooded a large tract of country which had been reclaimed

from the bed of the ocean by the forefathers of the people who did not hesitate to devote their fertile lands to desolation in the hope of winning freedom for their country. "Better a drowned land than a lost land," cried several, and the estates sent this message to the burghers of Leyden, "Rather will we see our whole land and all our possessions perish in the waves than forsake thee, Leyden. We know full well, moreover, that with Leyden all Holland must perish also."

Ships laden with provisions for the starving people of Leyden were got ready at various ports on the coast, and then the attempt was made to reach the besieged city. The vessels made their way to within five miles of the place, where they were stopped by a strong dyke, which still kept out the water from the immediate vicinity of Leyden. This was but weakly defended by a few Spaniards, who were easily overcome by the rescuers. Then the great dyke was broken in several places, and the ships sailed through the openings only to find their way barred by another dyke. This was taken from its defenders and ruptured; then the ships passed through, but were soon stranded in the shallow water almost within sight of the anxious burghers of the city and under the fire of the Spanish guns.

But the rescuers were not daunted, and before long their drooping spirits were raised. The wind commenced to blow strongly, driving the waves of the sea through the gaps in the dykes. Once more the vessels floated, and were able to draw still nearer to the city. Steadily they advanced, engaging the Spaniards on the way, until within a very short distance of the town they were again stranded, and lay for some days helpless on the shallow sea.

Meanwhile the people of Leyden were almost in despair. A number of them begged the burgomaster to surrender to Spain and save them from death by starvation. His reply is worth remembering: "What would ye, my friends? Why do ye murmur that we do not break our vows and surrender the city to the Spaniards? a fate more horrible than the agony which she now endures. I tell you I have made an oath to hold the city, and may God give me strength to keep my oath. Your menaces move me not; my life is at your disposal; here is my sword; plunge it into my breast, and divide my flesh among you. Take my body to appease your hunger, but expect no surrender so long as I remain alive."

Once again the wind came to the relief of the city. In the beginning of October a violent gale arose which floated the stranded ships. They moved forward, broke down the few remaining dykes, and were soon lying in the canals of the city and unlading their precious cargoes amid the tears and thanksgivings of the rescued people.

The Federal Commonwealth.—The relief of Leyden revived the drooping spirits of the Netherlands, who shortly afterwards united in a confederation of seventeen provinces determined to throw off the yoke of Spain. This union brought added strength and further success in the struggle. But before long the provinces of the north separated from those of the south, and William of Orange confined his efforts to founding a strong league of the northern Protestant states. The Federal Commonwealth of the Seven United Provinces was organised in 1581, and William became head or stadtholder of the new state, which in extent nearly answered to the present kingdom of the Netherlands. The two

leading states of the Commonwealth were Holland and Zealand.

The Prince of Orange was the leading spirit of the new confederacy, and Philip of Spain felt that if he were removed he might even yet work his will on the Netherlands. He tried to detach the prince from the cause he had at heart by the offer of titles, wealth, and high office in his kingdom, but all in vain. Then the Spanish king published a decree declaring the stadtholder an outlaw, and offering a large reward to any one who would take his life. Five attempts were made to assassinate him, but without success. Finally the foul deed was accomplished by a man named Balthazar Gerard, who managed to hide himself on the stairway leading from the dining-room of the prince's palace. William was walking leisurely down these stairs after dinner when the assassin stepped forward and discharged a pistol at his breast. He staggered and was saved from falling by one of his officers, who gently placed him upon the ground and called for help. The prince was carried to the dining-room, laid upon a couch, and in a few moments breathed his last. The murderer escaped, but was afterwards caught and put to death. His heirs, however, received the rewards offered by the Spanish king.

William the Silent had given his life for the people, who owe their national existence in great part to his genius, his patience, and his never-failing courage. His long struggle with the son of the old emperor whom he had loved was over, but the end for which he had striven was accomplished. He had won freedom for the people of the Netherlands and founded a new state in Europe. After his death his dauntless spirit lived on

and nerved the people of Holland to renewed efforts to keep unbroken the liberty to which their great leader had led them. In 1609 Spain agreed to a "truce for twelve years," which was in reality an acknowledgment of the independence of the United Provinces. And about forty years afterwards that independence was at length completely recognised by the Peace of Westphalia, which concluded a great European struggle known as the Thirty Years' War. The southern provinces of the original Low Countries, after many changes, in time were formed into the present kingdom of Belgium.

CHAPTER XVI—THE DECLINE OF THE EMPIRE AND THE ASCENDANCY OF FRANCE

The Thirty Years' War.—In the first half of the seventeenth century there was a great struggle in Europe which is known in history as the Thirty Years' War. It began in Germany, and at first was a contest between Catholics and Protestants, the last of the wars about religion. The Emperor Ferdinand II., who, as a member of the powerful Hapsburg family, was also King of Bohemia, provoked the Protestants of that state to rebellion by his intolerance. He was deposed from the throne of Bohemia, and a Protestant prince, known as the Elector Palatine Frederick, who married Elizabeth, daughter of James I. of England, was elected in his place. Frederick was, however, driven out of Bohemia, and before long the war became general throughout Germany. At

first the Emperor Ferdinand was successful, chiefly owing to the genius of his two famous generals, Tilly and Wallenstein. Then a king of Sweden, named Gustavus Adolphus, turned the tide in favour of the Protestants, and Cardinal Richelieu, the powerful minister of the King of France, also gave them help. With the appearance of the French on the scene the character of the war was changed. It then became a contest between France and the house of Austria as head of the Holy Roman Empire. The issue of the struggle was with France, and from the time of the Thirty Years' War we may trace her ascendancy as a European power. On the other hand, the empire was weakened, and became little more than a name; yet the name lived on for about one hundred and fifty years longer.

The chief terms of the Treaty of Westphalia, which ended the war, are worthy of our attention. The government of each German state was henceforth to be free to choose its own religion. This in itself was a death-blow to the old imperial idea of world-lordship to be shared by emperor and pope. "The last link which bound Germany to Rome," says a historian, "was snapped; the last of the principles by virtue of which the empire had existed was abandoned."

The independence of Holland and of Switzerland was definitely acknowledged, while both France and Sweden obtained territory within the empire. Thus we see the old imperial fabric crumbling away. Germany was broken up into a number of separate states, of which Austria under the Hapsburgs was the chief. Italy was gone, for the portions of that land held by Charles V. had passed to Spain. Holland and Switzerland had thrown off their allegiance to the emperor, which for

some time had been merely nominal. And favoured by the weakness of Germany and the decline of Spain, France rose to the first position in Europe. Let us



GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS.

now learn a little about some of the men who helped to work out these great changes.

Three Famous Generals.—We begin with the generals, and find foremost among them three men whose names

stand high in the annals of warfare. These were Count Tilly, who commanded the combined forces of the Catholic princes; Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, who came to the help of the Protestants in their extremity; and Albert von Wallenstein, commander of the Imperial army. Tilly was conquered by Gustavus Adolphus, who, in his turn, met his death in battle with Wallenstein.

Count Tilly was a native of the Netherlands, and a born soldier. Near the end of his life he boasted that he had won no less than thirty-six battles. In 1620 he routed the Bohemians at the great battle of Prague, and three years later inflicted another severe defeat upon the Protestants near Munster. Then he went on from triumph to triumph till his imperial master began to have hopes of reviving the ancient glories of the empire. In 1630 he besieged the town of Magdeburg, and when the place was finally reduced it was given up to pillage and massacre.

"Here commenced a scene of horror," writes a German historian, "for which history has no language, poetry no pencil. Neither innocent childhood nor helpless old age; neither youth, sex, rank, nor beauty could disarm the fury of the conquerors. . . . Some amused themselves with throwing children into the flames, others with stabbing infants at the mother's breast. Some officers of Tilly's army, horror-struck at the dreadful scene, ventured to remind their leader that he had it in his power to stop the carnage. 'Return in an hour,' was the answer, 'and I will see what I can do; the soldier must have some reward for his danger and toil.'"

Gustavus Adolphus, the conqueror of Tilly, was known as the Lion of the North. He was a Protestant of strong religious convictions, and one of the greatest leaders who

ever commanded an army—patient and resolute, quick to see an advantage as well as to avail himself of it. Before leaving Sweden he commended to his assembled nobles his little daughter Christina as his successor, for he had a foreboding that he would not return. “Hitherto God has wonderfully protected me,” he said, “but I shall at last fall in defence of my country. I bid you all a sincere—it may be an eternal—farewell.”

Then he set out for the southern shore of the Baltic. “The Snow King will melt as he moves southward,” said the supporters of the emperor, but Tilly was wiser than they. He saw in the Swedish king a leader who would task the power and resources of the Catholic princes to the utmost, and his estimate of the worth of his great opponent proved to be correct. In a short time Gustavus had defeated Tilly near Leipsic, and again on the banks of the Lech, and had taken up his residence in Munich, the capital of Bavaria. In his second fight with the “Lion of the North” Tilly fell mortally wounded.

Meanwhile Wallenstein, who was destined to overcome the northern king, had already distinguished himself as a general on the side of the emperor. At his own cost he raised a large army of men, and placed them at the service of his imperial master. He was appointed commander of this force, and helped, with Tilly, to extend and strengthen the authority of the emperor in the southern portion of Germany. “It is time for the emperor to make himself master of his dominions,” he said; and by his vigorous measures to this end he brought upon himself the enmity and hatred of the emperor’s chief vassals. This led to his losing his command, and his retirement to his palace in Prague, where he lived in great splendour, and waited for his opportunity.

When the victorious Swedes had marched into the heart of Germany and Tilly had fallen, the emperor turned for help to Wallenstein, who offered to raise another army, if he might have absolute control over it. The fact that the emperor agreed to this is proof that he felt the situation to be desperate. At Lützen in Saxony the newly-raised army of Wallenstein met that of the Swedish king, and a fierce battle took place, in which the Swedes gained an indecisive victory, but lost their leader. Gustavus had shown great personal courage and energy during the fight, at one time dismounting and leading a section of his infantry with pike in hand, at another urging on his horsemen both by exhortation and example. In the press of the battle he was struck by a ball in the arm and another in the breast, and fell from his horse, which galloped riderless away. His body, stripped and mutilated, was afterwards found among a heap of slain.

Only two years later Wallenstein met his death, but not, like Tilly and Gustavus, on the battlefield. For a considerable time the emperor had suspected him of treachery, and there is very strong reason to believe that he contemplated the betrayal of the cause for which he had fought so well. Stories of his secret dealings with the enemy were brought to the palace of the emperor at Vienna, and Ferdinand resolved to remove him from his command. He therefore gave his post to a leader whom he thought he could safely trust, and ordered that Wallenstein should be arrested. The emperor's officers were unable to secure the person of the general, and it was determined to assassinate him. Three of his personal servants were bribed to do the work, and Wallenstein was stabbed to death in his bed-chamber, meeting his death like the brave man that he was.

Cardinal Richelieu.—Meanwhile France had been sending help to the Protestants both in money and in men. This was done to suit the policy of the great minister of King Louis XIII., Cardinal Richelieu, who for twenty years was practically ruler of France. This man had two great aims—to make the authority of the French king absolute, and to raise France to the first place in Europe.

To increase the power of the king, Richelieu saw plainly that he must decrease that of the great barons, and to this end he worked steadily and without fear. He brought the nobles within the power of the law, which they had for long evaded, and made them answer for their crimes in a manner which many of them had come to think was meant only for those far beneath them in rank. He levelled many of their strong fortresses with the ground, and so made them unable to defy the king, as they had done for long. The king was to be supreme in the land, and the people of all degrees were to be his servants.

In this work Richelieu found that he was also opposed by the Huguenots, who had ideas on the rights of the people which did not agree with the absolute power of the king. The cardinal therefore resolved to ruin the party, not so much because they were Protestants, but because they were in opposition to his political views. He therefore commenced a crusade against them, and himself marched at the head of an army to the attack of La Rochelle. The city held out for fifteen months, and only surrendered when about half of the population had died of starvation and the garrison was reduced to a mere handful of men. The walls and forts of the city were destroyed, and now the political power of the Huguenots was completely broken. Richelieu, however, granted

them freedom of worship and other privileges, which shows that this, the last organised campaign against the French Huguenots, was not really a religious war.

In order to accomplish the second of his great objects Richelieu aimed at weakening the power of the house of Austria and extending the French boundary at the expense both of the Emperor and of the King of Spain. "As far as Gaul reached," he said, "so far shall France extend." In the Thirty Years' War he saw his opportunity. He had harried and crushed the Protestants in his own country, but this did not prevent his helping them against the Catholics in Germany, for by so doing he aimed a blow at the emperor. He entered into a treaty with Gustavus Adolphus; he also attacked the Italian possessions of Spain, which was closely connected with the empire. He did not live to see the full success of his foreign plans, but before his death he saw enough to show that he had laid sure foundations of the greatness to which France reached under the next king, Louis XIV.

Richelieu died in 1642, leaving Louis XIII. complete master of a well-ordered and, on the whole, a prosperous kingdom. For in the strong and absolute power of the king Richelieu saw what he thought the only sure and safe preventive of lawlessness. He hated anarchy, and he had worked to suppress it by strengthening the hand of the sovereign. A historian relates an anecdote of the great cardinal which shows at a glance his position and his purpose in France. "Louis XIII. noticed one evening at a function that the courtiers crowded round the great minister, leaving him alone and unnoticed. "Pass on!" he angrily said to Richelieu, who stood aside to let him go by—"Pass on, as you are the first

here." "Yes, sire," replied the cardinal, taking hold of a light, "but it is in order to show the way to your Majesty."

Louis XIV. and his Time.—The power of Richelieu passed into the hands of his friend Cardinal Mazarin,



CARDINAL RICHELIEU.

who ruled France during the childhood of Louis XIV., who was only a boy of five when his father died. The Thirty Years' War came to an end, and the French eastern boundary was extended to the Rhine. The war with Spain continued for several years, and was ended by the marriage of Louis XIV. to a Spanish princess, Maria Theresa. This union ought to be remembered.

It was planned by Mazarin with the hope that it would in time lead to the union of the crowns of France and Spain. We shall see whether this hope was fulfilled.

Louis XIV. took the direct government of France into his own hands as soon as he came of age. When Mazarin died it is said that a Secretary of State approached the king and asked him to whom the royal officers should now apply for instruction. The king's answer was, "To me," and he soon showed that he really intended to become his own minister. With the help of a wise and able official named Colbert, who had been trained by Mazarin, he set to work to bring about reforms in various directions. The money affairs of the nation were carefully organised, and while taxation was somewhat lightened, the treasury of the king was largely enriched; trade, commerce, and agriculture were fostered and encouraged; a royal navy was built; canals and locks, roads and bridges, were constructed; men of science and of letters, artists, sculptors, and architects, were patronised and encouraged; the laws of the kingdom were revised, and in many respects improved; the army was reorganised and made to depend more upon the efficiency of its infantry, who were armed with the bayonet. Great attention was paid to military engineering and the construction of fortifications and entrenchments under the guidance of a famous soldier and engineer named Vauban, of whom it was said that during war he spent his time in taking cities for France and during peace in fortifying them, so that they could never be retaken.

All these reforms and improvements were carried out under the direct control of King Louis, whose will was law. He had succeeded to the absolute power with

which Richelieu had endowed Louis XIII., and though he used it in many ways for the advancement of France, yet the people of the country had no voice in the management of the affairs of the nation. "I am the State," the king is reported to have said, and the court chaplain preached the doctrine, "Kings are gods; they bear on their forehead a divine character. . . . To speak evil of the king is almost equal to blasphemy." In England the House of Stuart was at that time trying to force a similar doctrine upon their subjects, with what result our English history plainly tells.

A French writer of the time of Louis XIV. wrote a fable which is now very well known. It was about a frog that tried to swell itself up to the size of an ox in a vain endeavour to rival that animal in bulk, and burst itself in the attempt, as was to be expected. This fable was written in mockery of those who tried to rival the splendour of the palace of Versailles, which was built by Louis XIV. In this splendid and spacious palace the "Grand Monarch," as his subjects named him, held his court, and a very brilliant court it was. "The sovereign was the centre; the courtiers were planets revolving about him and shining by the reflected light of his splendour. If constant flattery could have killed the king, he would have died young, for poets, preachers, orators, and historians vied with the nobles and with each other in praising his glory and his power."

The Wars of Louis XIV.—The Grand Monarch engaged in constant wars. Stated shortly, he aspired to rule the whole of Western Europe and to establish a colonial empire in America. He was the champion of despotism, and the champion of civil liberty at the time was the small state which owed its origin to William the Silent.

Holland, or the United Provinces, was a republic, and the head of the state during part of the reign of Louis XIV. was William, Prince of Orange, who in 1689 became King of England. This prince schemed and fought to wreck the ambitious and aggressive plans of Louis XIV. In the great European wars of the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century we can see always these two great antagonists bending all their energies to bring about each other's fall.

We can here do little more than name the wars of conquest in which the French king engaged. He began by claiming the Spanish Netherlands in the right of his wife, disregarding the fact that Maria Theresa had given up all her claims at her marriage. War followed, and though Louis was checked by a league of the Protestant powers of Holland, England, and Sweden, he managed to retain some frontier towns which he had taken, and which were strongly fortified by Vauban.

England was now disposed of by the shameful Treaty of Dover, and Sweden was induced to withdraw from her alliance with Holland, which now seemed to lie at the mercy of the French king. But William of Orange secured the help both of Spain and Germany, and for six years kept up the struggle. During this time the dykes near Amsterdam were cut and the water allowed to flood a large tract of land, which had the effect of causing the French to retreat. By the Peace of Nimeguen the French king gave up his conquests in Holland, but kept others which he had made in the Spanish Netherlands and in Alsace near his eastern frontier.

In the year 1689 William of Orange, now King of England, was able to combine England, Holland, Austria,

and Spain against France. Louis tried to restore James II. to the throne of England, and his soldiers fought side by side with the Irish in the Battle of the Boyne. There were Frenchmen, too, on the side of William of Orange—a regiment of Huguenot refugees who had been driven from their native country by the persecution of their king only a few years before. For Louis had reversed the policy of Richelieu, and by an attempt to forcibly convert the French Protestants had driven thousands of them to seek new homes in England, Germany, Holland, and America. There were many skilled and industrious workmen among them, and the loss of France was the gain of the countries in which they found a refuge.

During this war the armies of Louis laid waste with great cruelty the Palatinate, a Protestant province of Germany. On the whole the issue of the struggle was not much in favour of either side, but the power of France was effectively checked, and Louis was forced by the Peace of Ryswick to give up all his conquests made during the war, except the great fortress of Strasburg.

Then came what was known as the War of the Spanish Succession. When King Charles II. of Spain died in 1700 it was found that he had left the whole of his possessions to Philip of Anjou, the grandson of Louis XIV. This practically meant that France and Spain were to be united under one sovereign. "The Pyrenees exist no longer," the old French king is reported to have said when Philip the Fifth succeeded to the throne of Spain. But such a union could not be permitted by the other powers of Europe. England, Holland, the emperor, and the rising German state of

Prussia, combined to force the French king to dethrone Philip of Anjou in favour of the Archduke Charles of Austria, second son of the emperor. In the great struggle which followed were fought the famous battles of Blenheim, Ramillies, Oudenarde, and Malplaquet, of which we have read in our English history. At the end of the war Philip was allowed to keep the crown of Spain. The Archduke of Austria, however, obtained Milan, Naples, Sardinia, and the Spanish Netherlands, and England got from France large possessions in North America.

Marshal Turenne.—The French general who carried out the work of laying waste the Palatinate was Marshal Turenne, who by this cruel act sullied a brilliant reputation. He was one of the most famous generals of his time, and took part in many of the numerous campaigns in the middle of the seventeenth century. He was much beloved by his men, whom he had repeatedly led to victory, and whose hardships in campaign he was always ready to share. At one time he was leading a French army against the Germans in the middle of winter. There was much suffering among the men, and on one occasion the marshal himself rested beneath a hedge while his troops marched past. Wearied with unremitting toil, he fell asleep, and woke to find himself protected from the snow, which was heavily falling, by a covering of soldiers' cloaks hung on the hedge above him. The owners of the cloaks were standing quite unprotected, awaiting the time when their "father," as they affectionately called him, should awake.

On another occasion the French army under Turenne was wading through a deep bog when some of the

younger men began to murmur; but the veterans said, "Be sure Turenne is more anxious and concerned than we are. He is thinking how to deliver us. He watches for us while we sleep. He is our father; it is plain you are but young."

Prince Eugene of Savoy.—In one of his best-known poems the poet Southey makes an old German peasant couple together the names of two great generals of the War of the Spanish Succession. Speaking of the famous Battle of Blenheim the old man says—

Great praise the Duke of Marlborough won
And our good Prince Eugene.

Of the fame of Marlborough our English history tells. Prince Eugene of Savoy was a general scarcely less famous, who had gained a great reputation in the wars of the emperor against the Turks, who in 1683 were able to advance as far as Vienna and to lay siege to the city. After his successes against the armies of the Sultan, Louis XIV. tried to obtain his services, offering him both money and high military and civil rank. But Eugene would have none of it. "Tell your king I am field-marshal to an emperor," he said to the envoys of Louis, "which is an office quite honourable enough for me. As for money, I do not desire it. My master will not suffer me to lack as long as I serve him faithfully."

And during the contest with France the emperor had no more faithful or energetic servant. Eugene took part in the victories at Blenheim and Oudenarde and elsewhere, and he drove the French from Italy. A few years later he again marched against the Turks, defeated them at Peterwardein, drove the remnant of their army into the strong fortress of Belgrade, and then after a

siege took the place by storm. Much of his success was due to his personal influence over his soldiers, whose hearts he had completely won. He looked carefully after their wants, treated them kindly and frankly, and as a consequence they would go anywhere or do anything for "the little abbot," as they called their leader, who had in his early youth been intended for the Church.

CHAPTER XVII—THE KINGDOM OF MUSCOVY

A Glance Backward.—We shall now turn aside from the countries of Western Europe to learn something of Russia, which up to the beginning of the eighteenth century was known to most of the English people as Muscovy. We have heard little about it in following the fortunes of the Western kingdoms, because the country was to a great extent cut off from the general course of events which make up the history of Europe in the Middle Ages. This was chiefly owing to its situation. Muscovy lay beyond the confines of civilisation, and was peopled by races who were looked upon by French, Germans, Spaniards, and Italians as little better than savages. She was also open to attacks from Asia, and, as we shall presently see, was at one time overrun by tribes from that continent. But she had a history of her own, though it had little to do with the rest of Europe. Let us look back for a few moments upon that history, and see how Russia came gradually to take her place among the nations of Europe as we know it to-day.

Muscovy becomes Christian.—In following the migrations of the Norsemen in the ninth century (Chapter III.) we read of Rurik, the Swedish viking, who became ruler of the Slavs in Novgorod ; of Oleg, the mighty chieftain ; of Igor, the son of Rurik, who was slain by the Drevlians and avenged by Olga, his wife ; and of Olga's conversion to Christianity.

It was Vladimir, the grandson of Olga, who imposed Christianity upon Russia, making the change in a vigorous and determined manner characteristic of his time. The old pagan worship of wooden idols was not to his taste. He therefore cast about for a new religion for himself and his people. He despatched envoys to various European countries, with instructions to make careful inquiries into the religious beliefs of the Jews, Mohammedans, and the two great branches of the Christian Church, the Roman and the Greek. The ambassadors returned, made their report, and Vladimir selected the Greek form of Christianity as best suited to his ideas of a religious system. Then he marched to Chersonesus in the Crimea, and took it from the Byzantines, to whom it belonged.

From this town he made a demand for the hand of a Byzantine princess in marriage. Let him first become a Christian, said the Byzantines, and baptized he was accordingly at Constantinople in the year 988. On his return to Kiev the figure of Perun, the wooden Slavonic god of thunder, was thrown from its pedestal on a hill near the city into the river. Vladimir then commanded his people to repair to the river's bank in order to be baptized, and none dared to disobey. So Russia became Christian, according to the early chronicler. But however the truth may stand, we know that the Greek

form of the Christian religion is that practised in Russia to-day.

The Golden Horde.—When Vladimir was on his deathbed he divided his kingdom among his sons, giving Novgorod to Yaroslav, who established the first Russian code of laws. This unfortunate division of the kingdom prepared the way for the invasions of the Mongol hordes, who hailed from Asia, and, sweeping down upon Russia in the first half of the thirteenth century, held sway till the middle of the fifteenth. They burned the cities of Moscow and Kiev and committed fearful atrocities. One of the leaders of the host, which was known as the Golden Horde, was a chief, or khan, named Batu, who exacted heavy tribute from the Russian princes.

Sarai, on the Volga, became the Mongol capital, and the invaders also made settlements in the Crimea, at Kazan, and at Astrakhan. The conquerors took every opportunity of humbling the subjugated princes. The latter were frequently sent on long journeys across Asia to do homage to the Mongol khans, and the military forces which they were forced to raise for the use of their masters were a constant drain upon their slender resources.

But in 1462 there arose a prince named Ivan III., who effectually broke the Mongol yoke. He had married a Byzantine princess, and, urged by his wife, he determined to make a stand for independence. According to custom, the Mongol chief at Astrakhan sent his portrait to Ivan, in order that the latter might do homage to it. Ivan trod the picture beneath his feet, as a sign that he would no longer submit. Then war followed.

Two great armies met on the banks of the Oka.

Panic seized the Mongols, and they fled, unconscious that their enemies were as much panic-stricken as themselves. Ivan, however, made several wise alliances with neighbouring princes, and the Mongols were driven eastward. His reign is also memorable for the advance made in general culture, owing to the influence of learned Greeks, who came to Russia in the train of the queen and spread abroad the knowledge for which they were famous. Moscow became the Russian capital, and a portion of the Kremlin Palace was built.

Ivan the Terrible.—The first Russian ruler who fully assumed the title of Tsar—which is said to be a Slavonic form of the Roman *Cæsar*—was Ivan the Terrible, who reigned from 1533 to 1584. The tsar finally drove the Mongols from Astrakhan, established schools, and during his reign a printing press was established at Moscow—a sure sign of true progress. But Ivan the Terrible seems to have been richly deserving of his title. He took the lives of any of his servants who displeased him without the least compunction and on small provocation. When a courageous general remonstrated with him, he declared that the servants were his property, and he could do as he pleased with his own. He was seven times married. He delighted in cruelties of every description. In a quarrel with his son, the heir to the throne, he struck the prince on the head with an iron pointed staff, inflicting a wound which proved to be mortal. Some historians declare that Ivan was insane, so great and unaccountable were his cruelties.

During his reign we find Englishmen in Muscovy. Two explorers—Richard Chancellor and Sir Hugh Willoughby—set out in 1553 to find a northern sea-route to India and China. They sailed past the North Cape and

entered the regions of ice, where Willoughby and a large number of the sailors perished of cold. Chancellor pushed forward and landed on the northern coast of Russia. From the shore of the White Sea he made his way to Moscow, where he was kindly received by the Tsar Ivan, who was always anxious to promote intercourse between his own subjects and the people of other lands.

In an account of Chancellor's visit to Moscow we read how the explorer and his friends were taken to see the Russian monarch:—

“Now after that they had remained about twelve days in the city there was then a messenger sent unto them to bring them to the king's house, and they being after a sort wearied with their long stay, were very ready and willing to do so; and being entered within the gates of the court, there sat a very honourable company of courtiers, to the number of one hundred, all apparelled in cloth of gold down to their ankles, and there-hence being conducted into the chamber of presence our men began to wonder at the majesty of the emperor.

“His seat was aloft in a very royal throne, having on his head a diadem or crown of gold, apparelled with a robe all of goldsmith's work, and in his hand he held a sceptre garnished and beset with precious stones; and besides all other notes and appearances of honour there was a majesty in his countenance proportionable with the excellency of his estate. On the one side of him stood his chief secretary, and on the other side the great commander of silence, both of them arrayed also in cloth of gold; and then there sat the council, of one hundred and fifty in number, all in like sort arrayed and of great state.

“This so honourable an assembly, so great a majesty



PART OF THE KREMLIN PALACE.

of the emperor and of the place, might very well have amazed our men and have dashed them out of countenance; but, notwithstanding, Master Chancellor, being therewithal nothing dismayed, saluted and did his duty to the emperor after the manner of England, and withal delivered unto him the letters of their king, Edward VI. The emperor, having taken and read the letters, began a little to question with them and to ask them of the welfare of our king, whereunto our men answered him directly and in few words. Hereupon our men presented something to the emperor by the chief secretary, which at the delivery of it put off his hat, being before all the time covered; and so the emperor, having invited them to dinner, dismissed them from his presence, and going into the chamber of him that was master of the requests to the emperor, and having stayed there the space of two hours, at the last the messenger cometh and calleth them to dinner."

The English were granted certain privileges in Russia, and trading centres—or factories, as they were then called—were established in various parts of the tsar's dominions. An ambassador was sent from Russia to the court of Queen Elizabeth, and numbers of adventurous Englishmen settled in the land, which had been opened out to their commerce. It was the tsar's ardent wish "that the Queen's Majesty and he might be to all their enemies joined as one, and that England and Russland might be in all manners as one." He did not obtain a definite alliance with England. The queen was advised to the contrary by her political counsellors, though she was herself eager to establish friendly relations with Russia. Ivan the Terrible could not understand this position. When he desired to follow

a certain course he followed it, counsellors or no counsellors.

"We had thought," writes the tsar to Queen Elizabeth, "that you were sovereign in your own country, and ruled with sovereign power, caring for the honour and profit of your country; therefore we wished to treat with you as with a sovereign. But we find that other men, without you, rule your country, and not men, but boors and merchants, the which seek not the honour and wealth of our majesties, but they seek their own profits of merchandise."

The first Russian conquests in Siberia were made in Ivan's reign. Yermak, a Cossack robber, was the leader of the first warlike expeditions against the natives of Central and Northern Asia. He placed his conquests in the hands of the "Father Tsar," and thus gained pardon for his offences. Forts were established in different places, where skins were collected, and a profitable trade was thus commenced. In after years the Russian conquests were further extended, and mines were worked in the southern regions of Siberia, to which political offenders and criminals were sent. Ivan the Terrible was succeeded by his son Feodore, who was as weak as his father was strong.

Peter the Great.—Tsar Peter, commonly known as Peter the Great, ruled in Russia at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century. The great aim of this monarch was to obtain outlets for Russian commerce by way of the sea. This was his chief reason for marching against the Turkish city of Azof. He took this place in 1695, but it was afterwards retaken by the Turks.

In order that he might make himself acquainted with the art of shipbuilding, Peter paid a visit to Saardam, in

Holland, where he worked for some time in the ship-building yard as an ordinary craftsman, living the simple rough life of his fellow-workmen. Then he visited England, and spent some three months at Deptford perfecting his practical knowledge of everything connected with shipping.

His uncouth manners and simple tastes not only astonished but amused the people of England, who were used to widely different conduct in connection with royalty. The British Government placed at his disposal a house at Deptford named Sayes Court, from the garden of which he could readily reach the dockyard. When the tsar had returned to his own country, the owner of the house made a claim on the Government for compensation for damage done by the Russian tenants. The place, he said, was in such a bad condition that he could scarcely describe it. Much of the furniture was broken or lost. The lawns and flower-beds were trampled down by what the owner called their "leaping and shewing tricks" upon them. The claim was satisfied by the payment of nearly seven hundred pounds.

When Peter returned to Russia he suppressed with great cruelty a mutiny of a regiment of Russian soldiery, and set about his immense task of modelling his country after the pattern of Western nations. He had to face much opposition on the part of certain sections of his own subjects, but all resistance was useless. The tsar was of a determined nature, and those who did not choose to give way were swept mercilessly out of the path of reform. He bent his energies towards the attainment of an outlet upon the Baltic, where the coasts were in the hands of the Swedes.

This brought on war with Charles XII. of Sweden,

one of the greatest military commanders of his time. At first the Swedes were successful, but Peter learnt many useful lessons from his defeats. Before long he gained control of the Neva, and after several successes met the Swedish army at Poltava in 1709. Here the Swedes were completely defeated, losing about 13,000 men. This was one of the most decisive battles in European history. By a treaty, signed some years afterwards, Peter obtained the Baltic provinces, which the Russians had coveted since the time of Ivan the Terrible.

On the banks of the Neva he then built the city of Petersburg. The undertaking cost an enormous sum of money and gave employment to a great army of workmen, many of whom were treated as little better than slaves. The new city became the capital of the country, and was defended on the seaward side by a strong fortress named Kronstadt. On the Caspian Sea Peter also obtained a port in 1722, when he took Baku, a city famous for its oil springs, from the Persians.

During the reign of this energetic monarch many changes were forcibly made in Russian customs and usages, the aim of the tsar being to make his people more like the civilised nations of the West. One of his commands forbade the wearing of a beard except on payment of a tax. Many of his reforms were distasteful to large numbers of his people, who were contented with the old ways. Among the discontented was Peter's own son, Alexis, who was ultimately executed after trial as a traitor. The fact that Peter did not attempt to reverse the sentence of death passed upon his own son by the appointed judges is quoted both in praise and condemnation of the tsar. To some it proves his fairness and determination to allow no private feeling to stand in the

way of the development of his country, for Alexis is said to have declared his intention of reverting to the old order of things on the death of his father. To others it is evidence of Peter's cruelty and want of natural feeling.

Peter the Great died in 1725, mourned by the greater part of his people as their master, their father, who had left his people, so they said, "orphans and powerless." "All Russia seems but the monument of this strange colossal man," writes a historian. "He added six provinces to her dominions, gave her an outlet upon two seas, a regular army trained in European tactics, in lieu of the disorderly militia previously existing, a fleet and a naval academy, and, besides these, galleries of painting and sculpture, and libraries. The title of Great cannot justly be refused to such a man."

CHAPTER XVIII—THE SUNDERED EMPIRE

Hapsburgs and Hohenzollerns.—The Thirty Years' War left the Holy Roman Empire weakened and despoiled—a shadow merely of its former greatness. The imperial power was in the hands of the Hapsburg House of Austria, from which the emperors were now nearly always chosen. The electors, it is true, kept up the form of choosing an emperor according to the old plan, but, except on two occasions, a Hapsburg prince always secured election. The capital of the empire was Vienna, the chief city of Austria. But the later Hapsburg emperors were really only rulers of the Austrian dominions. They had little actual authority over the princes of North Germany,

among whom the most powerful was the Elector of Brandenburg, who belonged to the House of Hohenzollern. This prince was also Duke of Prussia—a state which lay eastward of Brandenburg and did not form part of the empire. It was originally peopled by Slavs, and had been overrun in the twelfth century by the Knights of the Teutonic Order, who carried on a crusade against its heathen inhabitants and gave them their choice of baptism or the sword.

During the Thirty Years' War the head of the joint provinces of Brandenburg and Prussia was a prince named Frederick William, who was known as the Great Elector. He took the part of the Protestants and gave a refuge to many of the Huguenots who fled from the persecution of Louis XIV. His son Frederick obtained from the emperor permission to assume the title of king, not of Brandenburg, which was part of the empire, but of Prussia, which lay beyond its borders. He accordingly became King Frederick I. of Prussia in the year 1701. "The emperor," said Prince Eugene, when he heard of the matter, "in his own interests, ought to have hanged the ministers who advised him to grant this permission to the Elector of Brandenburg." For the Hapsburg House had by this act granted royal dignity to its most dangerous rival, the House of Hohenzollern. Thus a new power was born in Europe—that of Prussia, for the name of the outland state soon took the lead and overshadowed that of Brandenburg. And this power was destined to greatness, as we shall see in due time.

The second Prussian king, Frederick William I., worked hard to increase the power and prestige of the new European kingdom. He was in many respects a remarkable man—miserly, fierce, coarse, and brutal. In

intense hatred of France and all that was French he “aimed at being a *German*, but he went back to the days of Wittekind for his ideas of German culture and character; he was a tyrant of the most savage kind, but, after all has been said against him, it must be acknowledged that without his hard, practical sense in matters of government, his rigid, despotic organisation of industry, finance, and the army, his successor would never have possessed the means to maintain himself in the struggle which made Prussia a great power.”

We see, then, that there were now two great rival powers within the empire—Austria and Prussia. The outward show of the empire remained with Austria, which still kept up a pretence of the world-lordship which had dazzled the minds of men in the time of Charlemagne, which looked backward instead of forward. “But the rude, half-developed strength which cuts loose from the past and busies itself with the practical work of its day and generation was rapidly creating a future for Prussia.”

Frederick William I. of Prussia died in 1746, and was succeeded by his son, Frederick II., who is known in history as Frederick the Great. In the same year the Emperor Charles VI. passed away, leaving his hereditary dominions to his daughter, Maria Theresa, the only representative of the Hapsburgs, the male line having died out.

Frederick the Great.—The new king of Prussia made his reputation and earned his title of “*the Great*” chiefly by his genius as a military commander in campaigns, which were for the most part directed against the power of Austria under Maria Theresa. But before speaking of these we may with advantage learn a little about the man himself and his work as a ruler of Prussia.

His boyhood and youth were by no means happy, for his father did not spare the Crown Prince any of the severity which he visited on those about him. Take an example drawn from the diary of the daughter of Frederick William I.:—"When Frederick went into the king's room one morning, the king seized him by the hair, flung him down, and after he had exhausted the strength of his arm on the poor boy's body, he dragged him to the window, took the curtain rope and twisted it round his neck. The prince had presence of mind and strength to grasp his father's hands and scream for help. A chamberlain came in and plucked the boy away from the king." Such brutal treatment on the part of the royal father was of common occurrence, and it is not surprising to find the prince in his seventeenth year trying to make his escape. His plans were discovered; his companion, a young officer in the Prussian army, was put to death before his eyes, and he himself was imprisoned, treated with great severity, and finally sentenced to death. The sentence was only set aside on the protest of the old king's officers and ministers, and the prince was forced to undergo a term of close confinement. Such was the preparation for kingship which Frederick the Great received.

When he came to the throne, however, he soon showed capacity for humane and enlightened government. He loved literature—French by preference, in contrast to his father—and music, and his lofty aim was, in his own words, "to further the country's well-being and to make every one of his subjects contented and happy." He built roads and canals and encouraged agriculture, reclaiming many large tracts of uncultivated and marshy land, and doing all he could to establish throughout his

dominions a contented and thriving peasantry. The poor were his especial care, and when taxes were to be levied—and they were by no means few or light—he took care that the heaviest burden should not fall on those least able to bear it. He came to be spoken of as “Father of his People,” the “Procurator of the Poor,” the great “Land Father,” and, more affectionately still, “Father Fritz.” “He was as absolute a despot,” wrote a historian of his time, “as any of his fellow-rulers of the day; but his was a despotism of intelligence, justice, and conscience, opposed to that of ignorance, bigotry, and selfishness.”

Frederick was particularly proud of his army, and his soldiers, whom he often led to victory, almost worshipped him. Yet he was by no means an easy taskmaster. “Difficult, not undoable,” he said on one occasion, “and it must straightway be set about and done.” And at another time, before one of his famous victories, he thus addressed his generals: “Gentlemen, against all the rules of military science, I am going to engage an army nearly three times greater than my own. We must beat the enemy, or all together make for ourselves graves before his batteries. This I mean, and thus will I act. Remember that you are Prussians. If one among you fears to share the last danger with me, he may resign now, without hearing a word of reproof from me.”

A story is related by several writers which shows among other things the devotion which Frederick inspired in his soldiers. One day the king was riding round his palace grounds, when he stopped to ask a sentry the time of day. The man’s watch-chain was visible on his tunic, and Frederick naturally thought that at the end of it there would be a watch. The soldier for a moment

looked confused; then he saluted and drew from his pocket not a watch, but a bullet, which was fastened to the end of the chain. "My watch points only to one



FREDERICK II.

hour, sire," said the man—"the hour at which I am ready to die for your Majesty."

Like Louis XIV. of France, the Prussian king firmly believed that "to rule by work is the true secret of

power." He used to call himself the "first servant of the state," and he set an example of industry which the rest of the state officials might well have followed. Early in the morning he was to be found at his desk when not engaged on one of his campaigns, and he made himself acquainted with all the details of the work of government. He claimed the right to govern as a despot, but at the same time he took all responsibility upon his shoulders.

When Frederick died he left a kingdom whose boundaries he had widely extended chiefly by his wars with Austria. He also left a well-organised army, a full treasury, and, best of all, "an example of patriotism, of order, economy, and personal duty," which is unequalled in the lives of the princes of his own, or indeed of any other time. He made Prussia a European power to be ranked with France, Russia, and Austria, and he laid the foundation for the new Germany which arose nearly one hundred years after his death.

Maria Theresa.—The daughter of the Emperor Charles VI., Maria Theresa, succeeded to Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia, and was known at first by her highest title, Queen of Hungary. Charles VI. had a right to bestow these territories upon his daughter because they were family possessions. The empire was, of course, at the disposal of the electors, who did not choose any one for two years. Meanwhile several princes laid claim to the possessions of the young Queen of Hungary, and before long she had to face the combined forces of Prussia, Bavaria, and France. She was a young princess of great courage, capable of ruling even the empire, and the prospect of a struggle did not daunt her in the least.

"As for the brave young Queen of Hungary," writes Carlyle, "my admiration goes with that of all the world. Not in the language of flattery, but of evident fact the royal qualities abound in that high young lady. Most brave, high and pious-minded, beautiful too, and radiant with good-nature, though of temper that will easily catch fire: there is perhaps no nobler woman then living. And she fronts the roaring elements in a truly grand feminine manner, as if Heaven itself and the voice of duty called her, 'The inheritances which my fathers left me, we will not part with these. Death if it must be so; but not dishonour.'"

Frederick of Prussia seized Silesia; the French and Bavarians overran Austria; the Elector of Bavaria was chosen as the Emperor Charles VII. At this juncture Maria Theresa fled to Presburg, in Hungary, and summoned the nobles of the country to her aid. They assembled readily in answer to her call.

"It is but three months since she galloped to the top of the Konigsberg and cut defiantly with bright sabre towards the four points of the universe,¹ and already it has come to this. Hungarian magnates in high session, the queen enters, beautiful and sad, and among her ministers is noticeable a nurse with the young archduke, some six months old, a fine thriving child, who became Kaiser Joseph II. in after time.

"Her Majesty coming forward to speak, took the child in her arms, and there, in a clear, melodiously piercing voice, sorrow and courage on her noble face, beautiful as the moon riding among wet stormy clouds,

¹ According to the ancient custom of Hungarian sovereigns at their coronation; probably a sign that in defence of their kingdom they were prepared to meet all comers.

spake a short Latin harangue, in substance as follows: 'Hostile invasion of Austria; imminent peril to this kingdom of Hungary, to our person, to our children, to our crown. Forsaken by all, I have no resource but to throw myself on the loyalty and help of your renowned body, and invoke the ancient Hungarian virtue to rise swiftly and save me.' Whereat the assembled Hungarian Synod, their wild Magyar hearts touched to the core, start up in impetuous acclaim, flourish aloft their drawn swords, and shout unanimously 'Moriatur pro Rege nostro Maria Theresia'" ["Let us die for our king, Maria Theresa"].¹

It was in support of this dauntless young queen that the English king, George II., took the field, and defeated the French at Dettingen, not far from Frankfort, in 1743. The war went on for two years longer, when the emperor died, and the husband of Maria Theresa was elected to the imperial throne as Francis I. His brave wife thus became empress, and really ruled the empire, or at least the Austrian part of it, for her husband was a weak, amiable man, who was quite content to leave the conduct of affairs to his high-spirited wife. Under her rule the army was reorganised on the model of that of Frederick the Great, her hated enemy. The trade of the country was fostered, and many oppressive laws were swept away by the energetic empress. She kept the control of affairs in her own hands up to the time of her death in 1780, though her eldest son, Joseph, had then been emperor for fifteen years.

Frederick the Great and Maria Theresa.—In the war of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748), and in the

¹ From the *History of Frederick II.* by Carlyle, who tells the stirring story only to show that it rests upon a weak foundation of fact.

Seven Years' War (1756-1763), many European countries were engaged, and there was so much changing of sides that it is difficult at times to remember for what the armies of Europe were fighting. But through all the turmoil of the time we can always distinguish two great opponents, Prussia under Frederick the Great, and Austria under Maria Theresa.

At the beginning of the former struggle the armies of Frederick overran the greater part of the duchy of Silesia, which lay to the south of his own kingdom, and formed part of the Austrian dominions. He made this move before the Austrians were ready, and took them completely by surprise. France and Spain made alliance with him. Maria Theresa was helped by England and Holland, but she was forced to give up Silesia to the Prussian king, who then set to work to reorganise and settle his new province. Meanwhile the empress at Vienna watched her opportunity to recover her lost territory.

This came in 1756, when Frederick found himself faced by an alliance of Austria, France, Russia, Sweden, and Saxony. He could only obtain the help of England, and then he entered upon the campaign, in which he won the title of "the Great." At Rossbach he defeated the French, who had tried to march round him and cut him off from Prussia; "Seldom, almost never, not even at Crecy or Poitiers, was any army better beaten." At Leuthen he overcame the Austrians, when, after winning a decisive victory, Frederick said to his generals, "This day will bring the renown of your name and of the nation's to the latest posterity." At Zorndorf he conquered the Russians—a battle of three days, and one of the most furious ever fought in the history of the world. But at Hochkirch the Prussian king suffered

a check at the hands of the Austrians, and later Russia combined with Austria to inflict upon him a decisive defeat at Künersdorf.

"It is towards six o'clock; the swelling sun is now fallen low and veiled; gray evening sinking over these wastes. 'Is there not one ball that can reach me, then?' exclaimed Frederick in his despair. Such a day he had never thought to see. The pillar of the State, the Prussian Army itself, gone to chaos in this manner. Frederick still passionately struggles, exhorts, commands, entreats even with tears, 'Children, don't forsake me at this pinch'—but all ears are deaf. One regiment still stood by their guns, covering the retreat. But the retreat is more and more a flight; 'no Prussian army was ever seen in such a state.'"

Frederick's fortunes sank to their lowest ebb. Then he was saved by a change in Russian policy. When the war had gone on for six years the Tsaritzza Elizabeth died, and was succeeded by Peter III., who had always been an admirer of the Prussian king. The new tsar allied himself with Frederick, and in the next year the war came to an end. Silesia, the real bone of contention between Maria Theresa and Frederick, was left in the hands of the Prussian king.

The House of Savoy.—We may here conveniently pause to note the gradual advance of an Italian noble house, which was steadily and surely laying the foundation of the power which, more than a hundred years after the time of Frederick and Maria Theresa, was to unite the whole of Italy under one sovereign. This was the House of Savoy, one of the oldest families of European nobility. They held at first the small territory of Savoy, in the south-east of France, but as time went on they added

to their possessions in Northern Italy, and in 1713 the Duke of Savoy became a sovereign with the title of King of Sicily. A few years later this title was changed to that of King of Sardinia, and the kingdom ruled by this new European monarch was to include Piedmont in Northern Italy as well as the large island of Sardinia. The kings of Sardinia took part in several European wars, chiefly with the object of adding to their prestige among the powers of Europe. Gradually the little kingdom advanced in power, and at length became a strong centre round which the various Italian states were destined to rally in the formation of a united Italy. The House of Hohenzollern, the House of Hapsburg, the House of Savoy—we must watch these three carefully, for they have a very large part to play in the settlement of the European boundaries which our map shows to-day.

CHAPTER XIX—THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

A Historical Contrast.—The history of our own country is in a great degree a record of the gradual growth of the power of Parliament. From Magna Charta to the Reform Bills of the nineteenth century we may trace the various stages by which the governing power passed into the hands of the people, using the word in its broadest and truest sense. There were times when the claims of the sovereign and the nation came into conflict; but on the whole the increase of the Parliamentary power was brought about in a peaceable manner.

The history of France presents a great contrast to that of England. There we trace the gradual growth, not of the power of the people, but of the power of the sovereign. Under Louis XIV. that power was at its height, and France was practically an enormous estate of which the king was the owner. Philip the Fair, as you may remember, had given to France a Parliament of a kind, which met for the first time in Notre Dame in the year 1302, and was called the States-General; during the next five hundred years this body met only thirteen times, and when it did meet the commons were always outvoted by the nobility and clergy. Yet the governing power in France did eventually pass into the hands of the people. Not, however, by a slow process of steady growth, but by a great national upheaval, in which much blood was shed and many crimes were committed in the name of liberty. This was the French Revolution, the beginning of which we may date from the year

1789, when the king, Louis XVI., summoned the States-General, which had not met since 1614.

The French Revolution.—Let us take a glance at the general state of public affairs in France at this time. The king had absolute power, a legacy from Louis XIV., and the government was in the hands of ministers responsible to him alone. He kept up an expensive and extravagant Court at a time when the country was deeply in debt, owing chiefly to the wars in which France had been engaged for more than a hundred years. The mass of the people, the peasants and small farmers, the burghers and merchants, were heavily taxed, while the nobility and clergy were almost exempt. The king and his nobles had the right to demand free labour from the peasantry whenever they required work done upon their estates. The townspeople were also subject to oppressive laws and regulations, which acted always to the benefit of the king.

Even in the days of the Grand Monarch there had been discontent among the people, but no one had dared to give expression to it. But as time went on murmurs began to be heard. Why should the nobility and clergy be free from the burden of taxation? Why should the people be denied a share in the government? Why indeed, asked others, driven to extremes, should there be kings and nobility at all? The people of the British colonies in America had lately risen against what they considered oppression on the part of their rulers, and had broken away from the mother-country. With this example before them why should not France also become free?

King Louis XVI. tried to stem the rising tide of discontent by granting certain reforms, but in 1789, as

we have already said, he was obliged to call the States-General together. The people were determined to have a share in the government. They obtained it, and they used it to sweep away king, court, and nobility. France passed through a time of terror and bloodshed which is unequalled in the history of Europe, perhaps of the world. The nations looked on appalled at the fearful scenes of wild disorder, riot, and butchery which for three years disfigured the capital of the "fair realm of France." The history of the time is full of action, crowded with incidents and events, but we can here only indicate the general current of the great movement.

The States-General summoned by Louis reorganised themselves as the National Assembly, in which the Commons or *Tiers État* were numerous enough to out-vote the nobles and higher clergy. The king became alarmed and collected troops. The people of Paris organised a National Guard for their own defence. A report was spread about that the king had ordered the commander of the Bastille, a strong military fortress and prison in the centre of Paris, to turn his guns on the city. A great mob thereupon marched on the fortress, stormed it, butchered its defenders, and razed it to the ground. "Why, this is a revolt!" said Louis when he heard of the storming of the Bastille. "No, sire," was the reply of one near him, "it is a revolution."

This rising in Paris was followed by others in different parts of the country. King and nobles were greatly alarmed, and the Assembly was able to secure the consent of Louis to the establishment of a new order of things. The monarch was to be known as "King of the French"—that is, the people's king; the power of making laws was to be in the hands of the Assembly; titles and

privileges of nobility were to be swept away ; all citizens were to be equal in the eyes of the law.

But the granting of the "Constitution" did not bring a restoration of order. The king was distrusted and was closely watched, becoming practically a prisoner in the royal palace near Paris. With him were his wife, Marie Antoinette, the beautiful daughter of Maria Theresa of Austria, and their son, the Dauphin. Many of the nobles fled from the country to seek foreign aid against the revolutionists, and in 1792 an army of Prussians and Austrians marched over the Belgian frontier. The Assembly became alarmed, the king was deposed and imprisoned, and France was declared a republic, to be ruled by the National Convention. In January 1793 the king was beheaded.

Then came the time which is known as the Reign of Terror. The queen followed her husband to the guillotine. Every one who was thought to have any connection with the hated "aristocrats" was hunted to death. Paris was a scene of wild disorder, butchery, and anarchy. The revolutionists divided into two great parties—the Jacobins and the Girondists. Each party in its turn became supreme, and used its power to put to death those who differed from it. Among the most prominent leaders were Danton, Marat, and Robespierre, each of whom met a violent death during that time of horror. Danton and Robespierre were beheaded ; Marat paid for his hideous cruelty by death at the hands of a young girl named Charlotte Corday. The people of Lyons, of Toulon, and of La Vendée, a district in Anjou, rose against the republicans and were suppressed with great cruelty. Religion was declared to be abolished, and in the cathedral of Notre Dame the people of Paris bowed

down before a woman who was called the Goddess of Reason. "In future," it was said, "we want no other worship but that of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity." Everything, in fact, was to be changed. The months were renamed after the weather and the seasons, the Frosty, the Rainy, the Hot, and so on. The calendar was abolished, and men were no more to reckon from the birth of Christ, but from the Year One of the French Republic (1792).

In time this madness spent itself, and the governing power passed into the hands of more moderate men, who formed what was called the Directory. The rule of the mob was at an end. The Reign of Terror was over, and the attention of the people of the country was turned to wars with surrounding nations.

Napoleon Bonaparte. — The sovereigns of Europe, terrified by the course which events in France had taken, and fearful lest the example of the republicans should cause similar risings of their own subjects, joined together to attack the new state. Thus began the wars of the French Revolution, in which the principal figure was that of Napoleon Bonaparte.

This famous man was a native of Corsica, the son of an Italian soldier who had fought for liberty against the French. He became an officer of artillery and distinguished himself at Toulon, where he fought on the side of the republic. Under the Directory he began that career of conquest which in time made him master of France and almost of Europe. Austria, Germany, and England were leagued against France, and Napoleon was sent into Northern Italy to meet the Austrians and Sardinians. He defeated them in several brilliant engagements, captured Milan, Mantua, and Venice, and

established a republic in Northern Italy under the protection of France. This was the work of about two months.

His next expedition, in 1798, was directed against England. He sailed for Egypt with an ultimate design



NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.

upon India. Alexandria was stormed, the Mamelukes¹ defeated, and Cairo captured. Meanwhile, however, the French fleet had been beaten and almost entirely destroyed by Nelson in Aboukir Bay, and the army of Napoleon was cut off from France. The French leader

¹ The Sultan's body-guard.

marched into Syria, was checked at Acre by Sir Sydney Smith, and then secretly made his way to France alone. He found the Directory in discredit with the nation, placed himself at the head of affairs, and was chosen First Consul. This was only a step to a higher dignity.

Napoleon was not only a great general; he was a great ruler. He set himself resolutely to restore order in the country. He drew up a code of laws, using for guidance the maxim, "Every really good law must have good sense for its foundation." This code became the basis of law not only in France but afterwards in several other countries of Europe. The First Consul also restored the Catholic religion; gave support and encouragement to captains of industry and to inventors; set in order the system of education; created a new order of nobility whose ranks were to be filled only by men of merit.

War began again in 1800. In the early summer of that year Napoleon marched his army across the Alps, took the Austrians by surprise, and completely defeated them at Marengo. In the same year his general, Moreau, gained a great victory at Hohenlinden. By the year 1802 France had gained the Austrian Netherlands and had realised the ambition of Richelieu, who aimed at making the boundaries of modern France run with those of ancient Gaul. Napoleon was made First Consul for life, and in the year 1804, after the discovery of several plots against his life, he was chosen Emperor of the French, and crowned in the cathedral of Notre Dame. France was once more under one man—a ruler as absolute as any of the kings before the Revolution.

Napoleon was now master of France, and he set out to make himself master of Europe, and so brought about

his fall. But before that fall came he had almost realised his ambition. At Austerlitz he crushed the Austrians and Russians, and then occupied Vienna, where he forced the Austrians to give up all claims on Italy, and brought the Holy Roman Empire to an end. Holland was converted into a monarchy, and the crown given to his brother Louis. Sixteen German states were leagued together into a confederation, and passed under his protection. A new German kingdom—that of Westphalia—was set up and given to his brother Jerome. At Jena and Auerstadt he humbled Prussia and almost destroyed her independence. He compelled the Spanish king to abdicate, and placed his brother Joseph on the throne. Rome was annexed to France, and the pope carried away captive by a French army.

England withstood him, and the little kingdom of Sardinia, which could be helped by the British fleets. He planned the invasion of England, and prepared medals bearing the inscription "Struck at London, 1804." But Nelson spoiled his plans, and at Trafalgar dealt the first great blow at his power. Then Wellington, with much patience and persistence, delivered Spain from his armies. In Russia he met with repulse, and was compelled to make that disastrous retreat from Moscow which lost him 300,000 men of the *Grande Armée*. England, Prussia, Russia, Sweden, and Austria leagued together, and at Leipsic, in 1813, the allies defeated his "army of boys," which had taken the place of the brave veterans left on the plains of Russia. Then the allies marched to Paris, forced the fallen conqueror to abdicate, and sent him to the little island of Elba, off the Italian coast, where he was allowed to keep his title of emperor. One year passed and he escaped to France,

raised an army, and met Wellington at Waterloo. The rest we know—the great defeat, the flight, the refuge sought on board one of the ships which had done so much to spoil his plans, the last six years spent on the lonely island of St. Helena.

“Into a score of years he crowded his own dazzling career, his conquests, his triumphant assault on the Old World. In that brief space we see the lean, hungry conqueror swell into the sovereign, and then into the sovereign of sovereigns. Then comes the catastrophe. He loses the balance of his judgment and becomes a curse to his own country and to all others. He cannot be still himself, or give mankind an instant of repose. His neighbour’s landmarks become playthings to him; he cannot leave them alone; he manipulates them for the mere love of moving them. His island enemy is on his nerves; he sees her everywhere; he strikes at her blindly and wildly. And so he produces universal unrest, universal hostility. But he pursues his path as if possessed, as if driven by the inward sting of some burning devil. Then there is the inevitable collapse, and at St. Helena we are watching with curious compassion the reaction and decline.”¹

We have merely sketched in outline the remarkable career of Napoleon Bonaparte. Let us now pick out some of the outstanding events of that career, and get a closer glimpse of the man and his mind.

The Crossing of the Alps.—As an example of determination, of dauntless resolution, take the following account of Napoleon’s passage of the Alps in May 1800.

“With a great map of Italy spread out before him he

¹ *Napoleon—The Last Phase*, by the Earl of Rosebery.

planned the whole campaign before he left Paris. He designated the different armies by different colours. 'Here,' said he to his astonished secretary, 'the Austrian general will pass by Turin. Here he will fall back towards Alessandria. At this point I shall cross the river Po. I shall meet the enemy on the plains, and there,' said he, sticking a pin into the map near Marengo, — 'there I shall fight and beat him.'

"To make the movement a complete surprise to the enemy, Napoleon conceived the idea of crossing the Alps. The general who was sent to examine routes proposed that of the Grand St. Bernard, but added that the undertaking would be difficult. 'Difficult, of course!' replied Napoleon; 'the only question is, Is it possible?' 'Yes,' was the response, 'providing we make extraordinary efforts.' 'Enough,' said Napoleon, 'let us start at once.'

"The march began at midnight. It was soon found that the cannon could not be dragged on wheels up the heights and through the snow. The guns were accordingly taken from the carriages and each was placed in a log hollowed out to receive it; then a hundred men were harnessed to the gun and began to drag it forward. When the obstacles grew serious and the team slackened its pace, the bands played lively music to encourage them. When the snow grew so deep and the road so steep that advance seemed impossible, the drummers beat the charge. Then the men with loud cheers dashed forward as if storming the enemy's works, and up went the guns.

"Thus they advanced until they reached a narrow defile which the Austrians had impregably fortified. There the army separated. Part went round the fort in

single file, following a goat track over the rocks; the others dragged the artillery by in the night under a furious fire from the enemy. Thus within six days Napoleon, with thirty-five thousand men, passed over a rocky snow-covered barrier more than eight thousand feet high and came down like an avalanche on the plains of Italy."

The Battle of Austerlitz.—As William III. of England schemed to defeat the ambition of Louis XIV. of France, so William Pitt planned to overturn the power of Napoleon by uniting the states of Europe against him. At Austerlitz the last coalition formed against Napoleon by the great English statesman was completely broken. "Roll up that map," said Pitt, pointing to a map of Europe, when he heard the news, "it will not be wanted these ten years."

Napoleon's scheme for invading England had been ruined by Nelson, and the French soldiers encamped at Boulogne for the passage of the Channel were suddenly marched eastward into Austria, which was now leagued with Russia. The allies were preparing a surprise for Napoleon, but before they could set out for France they were surprised to find the newly-made emperor before the Austrian city of Ulm, which he forced to surrender. The French army then occupied Vienna, and a few weeks later met the Austrians and Russians at Austerlitz. The engagement which followed has been called the masterpiece of Napoleon's tactics. He was greatly outnumbered, and the enemy had the better of him in position, but by means of a pretended attack and skilful movements of his troops he was able to gain a complete victory. "As the Russians in retreat were crossing the frozen ponds at the foot of the heights of

Austerlitz, the French artillery with their grape-shot cut down company after company as a stalwart mower cuts down tall standing grass. Napoleon, who was standing on an eminence, saw that the battle was his, but he also saw how he could make the victory more complete. He ordered his gunners to depress their cannon so that the balls would strike the ice in front and behind the compact mass of the retreating enemy. The plan succeeded perfectly. Under a furious cannonade the ice gave way and multitudes of Russians were in an instant engulfed in the deep waters."

Moscow and Leipsic.—Seven years after Austerlitz Napoleon invaded Russia, and strange though it may appear, this eastward movement was in great part an attack on England. In the year 1806, after his conquest of the Prussians at Jena, the Emperor of the French had made a proclamation, known as the Berlin Decree, which (1) declared the British Isles to be in a state of blockade; (2) forbade all commerce and correspondence with the British Isles on the part of the countries within the Empire of the French and those occupied by the French army at the time. Russia at this time was in alliance with Napoleon, and for a short period the Berlin Decree put a stop to the great trade between that country and Britain. But before long the tsar saw that he was losing more by his friendship with France than he could lose by war with Napoleon. The Berlin Decree was therefore practically disregarded in Russia, and Napoleon prepared to force his will upon that country. He gathered together the *Grande Armée* of 678,000 men under the command of the best of his divisional generals, among them Ney, "the bravest of the brave," and marched eastward. The Tsar Alexander I.

could only raise 372,000 men to oppose his advance, and these were widely distributed over the western part of Russia, and charged with the work of laying waste the country, so that the invader would be unable to find food and forage for his enormous force. At first it was thought that Napoleon intended to advance upon St. Petersburg, but before long it was found that his object was to capture Moscow. At Borodino the Russians made a stand in defence of the ancient capital, but they were overcome by Napoleon, who soon entered the city to find it almost deserted by the inhabitants. Not long after his arrival a fire broke out in the city, supposed to have been originated by the Russians themselves. The governor of Moscow, an officer named Rostopchin, is said to have adopted this method of depriving the French of the fruits of their victory. The fire raged with great fury for six days, and then a large part of Moscow was little better than a heap of ruins.

Napoleon stayed for five weeks in the city, hoping to conclude a peace with the tsar. But his hopes were vain, for the Russians were determined not to make terms while the French remained in the country. Napoleon therefore commenced his return journey on the 18th of October, at the beginning of what was to prove a winter of more than ordinary severity. The progress of the returning army was retarded by the large number of waggons laden with the spoil of the fallen city, and there was no hope of obtaining supplies on the way, for the French in their advance had completed the work of the Russians by destroying all the villages on their route.

The men suffered great anguish from the severe cold, and soon also from the pangs of hunger. Bands of

Cossacks rode behind them, harrying the rear of the column and cutting off the stragglers. The soldiers dropped exhausted on the way, and died either of starvation and exhaustion or at the hands of the Cossacks. When the French reached the banks of the Beresina there was a terrible struggle with a Russian army, which resulted in fearful loss of life—"one of the most terrible pictures in history." Between Vilna and Minsk Napoleon deserted his men, and made his way with a few attendants through the country of his ally, the King of Saxony, to Paris. The wreck of the *Grande Armée* struggled across the Niemen, and the survivors made their way in scattered groups back to France. So ended the Russian expedition.

England, Russia, Prussia, Austria and Sweden, leagued together to crush the fallen tyrant. At Leipsic the allies met his hastily raised army, and after a three days' fight, known in history as the "Battle of the Nations," he was entirely defeated. In this battle fought Blücher, the "Marshal Vorwärts" of the Prussian army, who was afterwards to assist Wellington to give the final blow to the Emperor of the French. After Leipsic the allies marched westward on Paris, while Wellington was pushing through France from the south. "Napoleon has visited every capital in Europe," Blücher is reported to have said on the march. "It is only fitting that we should return the compliment."

The Last Phase.—For one year Napoleon lived in the small island of Elba, off the coast of Sicily, where he was allowed to keep the title of emperor, which had now entirely lost its original meaning. Then he escaped, landed in France, and passed in triumph to the capital.

Again their ravening eagle rose
In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing wings,
And barking for the thrones of Kings,
Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown,
On that loud Sabbath shook the spoiler down ;
A day of onsets of despair !
Dash'd on every rocky square
Their surging charges foamed themselves away ;
Thro' the long tormented air
Heaven flashed a sudden jubilant ray,
And down we swept and charged and overthrew,
So great a soldier taught us there
What long-enduring hearts could do
In that world earthquake, Waterloo ! ”

Napoleon had been beaten before, and had turned defeat into victory, but after Waterloo he was no longer the man he had been. His brother urged him to dare, but his answer was, “I have dared too much already.” Shortly after reaching Paris he once more abdicated. “I offer myself,” he declared, “a sacrifice to the hatred of the enemies of France. My public life is finished, and I proclaim my son Emperor of the French.” Not long afterwards he made his way to the coast, hoping to get away to America. But the English cruisers were too watchful, and at last the man who in 1804 had planned the invasion of England determined to throw himself on the mercy of his arch enemy. “A prey to the factions which divide my country,” he wrote to the Prince Regent of England, “and to the enmity of the greatest powers of Europe, I have terminated my public career, and I come to seat myself at the hearth of the British people. I place myself under the protection of its laws, which I claim from your Royal Highness as the most powerful, as the most constant, and the most generous of my enemies.”

Then followed the surrender at Rochefort to the captain of the *Bellerophon*, and the exile to the lonely island of Saint Helena. Here the fallen emperor spent the last six years of his life in the company of a few personal friends and faithful dependents. He died at Longwood in the evening of the 5th of May 1821. "A great storm was raging outside, which shook the frail huts of the soldiers as with an earthquake, tore up the trees which the emperor had planted, and uprooted the willow under which he had been accustomed to repose. Within, the faithful Marchand was covering the corpse with the cloak which the young conqueror had worn at Marengo."

The Coronation of Napoleon.—It is necessary that we should try to understand the implied meaning of the coronation of Napoleon in Notre Dame in December of the year 1804. How was it that he came to use the imperial title which of right belonged to the Emperor Francis II., who ruled in Vienna as head of the Holy Roman Empire?

The French have always claimed Charlemagne as belonging to their nation, and Napoleon saw in himself the rightful successor of the great Frankish emperor. His ambition was to revive and magnify the glories of the empire, to bring all Europe within its boundaries, and to occupy himself the throne of Charlemagne and Caesar Augustus. He therefore summoned the pope to Paris for his coronation, and in the great cathedral was anointed as emperor, but the act of crowning he performed himself as a sign that the spiritual power was subject to his own. He was also crowned at Milan as King of Italy, in imitation of the old emperors. His claim, of course, was absurd, and his empire was a new

and strange thing. But its birth marks the death of the empire founded by Charlemagne, which had lived on with varied fortunes for a little more than a thousand years. Two years later, when the Austrians had been crushed at Austerlitz, Francis II. published a declaration announcing that he resigned the imperial title, and henceforth he was known simply as the Emperor of Austria. The old title of emperor thus lost its meaning, and might be assumed by the ruler of any country. But from 800 to 1804—from the time of Charlemagne to that of Francis II.—it had one meaning, and was used in speaking of one sovereign who was head of the Holy Roman Empire.

CHAPTER XX—THE NEW GERMANY

The Release of Germany and Italy.—Let us once more remind ourselves what was the real meaning of the declaration published by the Emperor Francis II. in 1806. It put an end to the Holy Roman Empire, which was once said by a witty Frenchman to be neither holy nor Roman nor empire. It declared, in fact, that the sovereign in Vienna would no longer claim to be King of Germany, King of the Lombards, and Emperor of the Romans. Henceforth he was to be called simply Emperor of Austria. We thus see that, broadly speaking, the empire had fallen into three parts—Germany in the north, Austria in the middle, and Italy in the south. The middle portion was already provided with a sovereign, and had a kind of national unity. The northern and southern portions were

each split up into several separate states. There was no Germany as we know it—no Italy. But within seventy years after the declaration of Francis II. a new Germany and a new Italy came into being, each united, and no longer linked in an unnatural union. We have then to trace the foundation of modern Germany and of modern Italy, and our work will be done. The development of each of these two countries as a separate nation had been delayed by the existence of the Holy Roman Empire, as we have noted several times in the course of these chapters. Now that the empire was dissolved, and the empty claims of the emperors finally put aside, the way was clear. Germany under the leadership of Prussia, and Italy under the leadership of Sardinia, quickly, as history counts quickness, develop into the German Empire and the Italian Kingdom of our own day.

The imperial claims of Napoleon are interesting, but only as an illustration of the nature of "Our last Great Man," as Carlyle calls him. He wished, indeed, to revive the empire of Charlemagne, but the plan was born and died with his own rise to greatness—a purely personal matter. He might for a time hold several nations together by the power of the sword, but when he fell at Leipsic his empire was at an end. The national idea had taken the place of the imperial idea. Men no longer thought, as they had once thought, that "it was a matter of right that there should be a universal monarch of the world; secondly, that universal monarchy belonged no less of eternal right to the Roman emperor, the successor of Augustus; and thirdly, that the German king was the undoubted Roman emperor, and therefore of eternal right, Lord of the World." The imperial idea had lived long; it was magnificently grand, and it was very simple. It

went down before the idea that each community of people who spoke the same language should band together to form a nation free and independent of all others.

If we wish to trace the beginning of the new German Empire we must (1) follow the fortunes of the German states which were separated from Austria at the ending of the Holy Roman Empire up to the year 1870; (2) see what happened in France after the final defeat of Napoleon up to the same date; (3) watch France and Germany come together in the great conflict of 1870, which is known as the Franco-German War; and out of that time of turmoil we shall see the new Germany spring into being.

The German Confederation.—In the year of Waterloo, at the Congress of Vienna, the numerous states of Germany were joined together to form what was called the German Confederation. This was a loose kind of union, which did not by any means form a strong and united nation; the time for that had not yet come. Francis of Austria, the last of the emperors, was president of this union, of which his duchy of Austria, but not his kingdom of Hungary, formed a part. The King of England was a member of the Confederation, because he was head of the German state of Hanover. The King of Prussia was also a member, as ruler of Brandenburg and other German provinces, but not as the head of Prussia itself, which then lay outside Germany, and had never formed part of the Holy Roman Empire.

This Confederation lasted till 1866. In the meantime we may see at work a distinct movement among the North German states towards closer union. Prussia, of course, took the lead in this movement, which was greatly strengthened by the establishment of the Zollverein, or

Customs-Union. This was an arrangement by which several of the German states, with Prussia at their head, agreed to abolish the duties levied on goods passing from one state to another—practically a measure of internal free trade. There was all the time great rivalry between Prussia and Austria, and while the Austrian emperor was engaged in suppressing a movement for independence among his Hungarian subjects, Prussia proposed that the North German states should combine with her and form a new confederation independent of Austria. This led in 1866 to war between Austria and Prussia. During this conflict there rose to prominence a Prussian statesman named Otto von Bismarck, the chief minister of William IV. of Prussia. The war ended in victory for Prussia. The last battle was fought at Sadowa or Königgratz in Bohemia, a six hours' furious fight decided late in the day in favour of the Prussians by the arrival of the Prussian Crown Prince with reinforcements, which had been as anxiously awaited by his father as were those of Blucher on the field of Waterloo. The result of the war was the final separation of Austria from the North German states, which were now formed into a new confederation, of which Prussia was the leading member. There were states in South Germany not forming parts of the Austrian Empire which held aloof from the North German Confederation, but when in 1870 war broke out with France these states rallied round Prussia, and Germany presented a united front against the enemy. The Crown Prince who saved the day at Sadowa was the husband of the Princess Royal of England, eldest daughter of Queen Victoria, and afterwards became the German Emperor Frederick.

Changes in France.—Meanwhile France had been pass-

ing through many great changes. Louis the Eighteenth, who succeeded Napoleon, ruled on the whole as a constitutional sovereign—that is, he shared the government with a national parliament consisting of an upper and a lower house. His successor, Charles X., tried in a measure to go back to the old system which had been so forcibly swept away at the Revolution, and so provoked another rising in 1830, by which he lost his crown and was driven into exile. He was followed by Louis Philippe, Duke of Orleans, as King of the French, who tried to rule as a “citizen king,” gradually lost the favour of his people, and in 1848 signed an abdication and then fled to England. The next French ruler was Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, nephew of the exile of St. Helena, who became President of the new republic, and in time gained the favour of the army, dismissed the chamber of deputies, seized and imprisoned most of his opponents, and not long afterwards took the title of emperor as Napoleon III. It was during his time that the Crimean War took place, in which French and English fought against the Russians. And he was still the head of what is called the Second French Empire when the Germans marched westward in 1870.

The Franco-German War.—What was it which brought about the great struggle between France and Germany? There was a dispute about the succession to the throne of Spain; but into this we need not inquire. France was really jealous of the growing power of Germany, and provoked the quarrel. Prussia and the rest of the German states were prepared, and it was the call to arm against a common enemy which really created the new German Empire, for both north and south responded to the cry. “On to Berlin” was the shout of the people of

Paris, but before many months had passed the Germans were at their gates.

The German army was under William IV. of Prussia, the conqueror of Sadowa; his son, the Crown Prince Frederick; Moltke, one of the greatest strategists of his time, and a number of other generals of proved worth and courage. With these went Bismarck, the man of "blood and iron," who had foreseen the war, and had taken care that France should have no ally upon whom to depend when the inevitable conflict came.

Napoleon moved towards Metz with the intention of crossing the Rhine into Germany. But his generals found the opposite bank of the river strongly guarded, and before long the Germans were upon French soil. Several engagements took place to the advantage of the Germans, and on the 1st of September the emperor's forces were completely defeated at Sedan. The next day Napoleon wrote to King William offering to surrender. "Not being able to die at the head of my troops," his letter ran, "I can only resign my sword into the hands of your Majesty."

The news reached Paris, and two days after the surrender at Sedan, France was once more a republic. The emperor had been deposed, his wife, the Empress Eugenie, was an exile in England, and the government was in the hands of a small republican committee, which at once took active steps for the defence of Paris against the Germans, who were rapidly advancing. The city was invested about the middle of September, and held out till the last day of January in the following year. During the siege the people of the great city—about two millions in number—suffered severely from hunger and the cold of winter. Several attempts were made to raise the

siege, but they were not successful. Gambetta, one of the republican leaders, escaped from the city in a balloon, and reached Tours, where he acted in the name of the Government, and tried to get together a French volunteer force for the relief of the besieged capital. But the Germans were carrying on the winter campaign with great energy, and had by this time overrun the greater part of France. On the 28th of January the forts around Paris were surrendered, and the Germans allowed provisions to be taken into the city for the starving inhabitants.

The First German Emperor.—Meanwhile one of the greatest events in the history of Germany had taken place.

The marvellous success of the German armies had further strengthened the bond of union between the various states. It was determined to ask William of Prussia to become the head of a new German Empire. This was done, and “on the 18th of January 1871, in the grand hall of the Palace at Versailles, where Richelieu and Louis XIV. and Napoleon I. had plotted their invasions of Germany, the king formally accepted the title of emperor, and the German states were at last united as one compact, indivisible nation.” The new emperor issued a proclamation to the German people which ended with these words, “May God permit us and our successors to the Imperial crown to give at all times increase to the German Empire, not by the conquests of war, but by the goods and gifts of peace, in the path of national prosperity, freedom, and well-doing.”

The war with France was soon ended, and a treaty of peace was signed. France gave up a large part of Lorraine and Alsace, as well as the city of Metz, and agreed to pay an enormous war indemnity.

Thus the new German Empire took its place among the powers of Europe. Henceforth, as in the olden days, the ruler of Germany was to be an emperor, but the name was no longer to imply any idea of world-lordship. It had lost the original meaning many years before, and was now used to denote the first of the German princes and head of the German state, who, in the words of William I., was "to rule, not in the spirit of the emperors who during the Middle Ages wasted the strength of Germany in vain attempts to extend their dominion over other nations, but with the sincere desire to constitute an empire of peace and prosperity, in which the people of Germany may find and enjoy what for centuries they have fought and struggled for."

CHAPTER XXI—THE NEW ITALY

The Yoke of Austria.—While Germany was rallying round Prussia, the various states which made up the Italian peninsula were gradually uniting under the leadership of Sardinia to form the present kingdom of Italy. The great rival of Prussia was the Hapsburg House of Austria, as we have seen. And it was chiefly with Austria that the people of Italy had to contend in their struggle to make Italy a nation.

For a long time the power of Austria had been supreme in Italy. It went down before Napoleon, but only for a time. When the Emperor of the French had practically ended his career at Leipsic, Austria became once more

the chief power in the Italian peninsula. She held the northern states of Venetia and Lombardy, and other portions of Italy were given to Hapsburg princes. The states held by the pope were under her influence, and so also was the kingdom of Naples in the south. Sardinia was comparatively powerless.

"Italy was divided on the map, but she had made up her mind to be one." There was among the people themselves a longing for independence and for national unity. The yoke of Austria was bitterly hated, and the despotic rule of the various princes in the peninsula caused much discontent. There were risings of the people in Naples, in Sardinia, and in the papal states, but these were put down chiefly with the help of Austrian troops.

The revolutionists were divided in their aims. One party wished for a republic; a second for a confederation of Italian states under the pope; a third for a constitutional monarchy under the King of Sardinia. The leader of the republicans was Joseph Mazzini, a native of Genoa, who had to fly from Italy after the failure of the risings already mentioned. He settled in Marseilles, and from that town organised and kept on foot the association known as "Young Italy," which numbered many thousands of Italians, and aimed at the establishment of a republic. When Victor Emmanuel I., King of Sardinia, was succeeded by King Charles Albert, Mazzini wrote a long letter to the new monarch in which he appealed to him to "champion the cause not merely of Piedmont, but of Italy." "All Italy," he wrote, "waits for one word—one only to make herself yours. Proffer this word to her. Place yourself at the head of the nation, and write on your banner *Union, Liberty, Independence*."

. . . Sire, on this condition we bind ourselves round you, we proffer you our lives, we will lead to your banner the little states of Italy. . . . Unite us, sire, and we shall conquer."

These words show that the republican leader recognised the fact that if Italy was to throw off the yoke of Austria all parties must unite under one leader. He also saw clearly that it was round Sardinia that the "little states of Italy" must finally rally. Charles Albert had little sympathy with Mazzini, whom he looked upon as a dangerous republican, but before long he did strike a blow for Italian liberty. This was in 1848, which has been called the "year of revolutions," because in nearly every state in Europe there was marked unrest and rebellion against authority. While Austria was engaged in repressing the Hungarian revolution of Louis Kossuth, Charles Albert attacked her Italian possessions. At first he met with great success, but before long was decisively beaten by the Austrian general Redetzky, who deprived him of his gains and invaded Piedmont itself. Charles Albert was forced to yield, and resigned his crown, which passed to his son, Victor Emmanuel II., who was able to obtain from Austria better terms than would have been granted to his father.

The Three Deliverers.—We saw how the founding of the new Germany was largely the work of three great men, William of Prussia the king, Bismarck the statesman, Moltke the soldier. In the task of uniting the states of Italy we have also three men who took the lead. These were Victor Emmanuel of Sardinia the king, Count Cavour the statesman, and Garibaldi the soldier. They did not work together so closely as the three builders of the German Empire, but in the end their work brought

about one result—the union of Italy under the King of Sardinia.

Victor Emmanuel began his work by putting his own house in order, and he made Sardinia the model of a constitutional kingdom. A parliament was established, trade and commerce were encouraged, education was re-organised, the army and navy were made more effective. Italians saw in Sardinia a forecast of what a new Italy might be, and thus by his home reforms and good government Victor Emmanuel proved his fitness for wider rule.

One of his leading ministers was Count Cavour, who in his youth had carefully studied the system of government of other European countries, especially that of England, which became to his mind the pattern state. He visited this country, and was often to be seen in the Strangers' Gallery of the House of Commons, listening intently to the debates, and watching with keen interest the procedure of the "Mother of Parliaments." He became a member of the first parliament of Sardinia, and it was owing to his unceasing labour and his wisdom that the people of Victor Emmanuel obtained a measure of freedom under just and liberal laws, which was elsewhere unknown in Italy. Then he was made chief minister by the king, and set to work to increase the prestige and power of Sardinia among the nations of Europe. It was in accordance with his advice that Victor Emmanuel sent to the Crimea a Sardinian force, which fought with France and England against Russia. Sardinia gained not only credit in the campaign, but also admission to the European councils which met to settle affairs when the war was over. "Italy a nation," writes a historian, "is the legacy, the life-work of Cavour." The opinion

sets aside other workers in the same field, for the statesman would have been powerless without the king and the soldier. But in the main it is true, for it was the wisdom of the statesman which pointed out the path by which the rest should tread.

The biography of Garibaldi, the Italian patriot-soldier, reads more like romance than sober fact. It is a record of stirring adventures in many lands, of hairbreadth escapes from perils by land and water, of remarkable success as a leader of men and as a fighter, of a life spent gladly and unselfishly in one great cause—the freedom and unification of Italy. For his share in the earlier Italian revolutions Garibaldi was condemned to death, but contrived to escape. He was for a time a teacher of Italian in Constantinople, and then became the leader of the Italian Legion, a body of exiles who fought under him in one of the numerous South American wars of the time. Returning to Italy in the “year of revolutions,” he took a leading part in the movement which converted Rome into a republic, but the pope was restored to power by the aid of the French, the new republic was overthrown, and Garibaldi became once more an exile from Italy. For some time he lived in New York, where he made his living as a candlemaker, and in 1859 he came back to take a foremost part in the conclusion of the struggle.

The New Kingdom of Italy.—Count Cavour’s policy was to obtain the help of France in the struggle with Austria. He was able to do this partly because the French emperor was jealous of Austria, partly because Cavour promised Savoy and Nice to France in case of success, and a little because Sardinia had helped France in the Crimean War. In 1859 Cavour felt himself strong

enough to take the first step towards bringing on a conflict, and soon Sardinia and France were standing shoulder to shoulder against Austria. At Magenta and Solferino the allies defeated the Austrians, and then the French emperor broke away from his alliance for reasons of his own. Peace was made, by which Sardinia gained a great part of Lombardy, and at the same time several of the smaller Italian states united themselves of their own free will with Sardinia. Thus the kingdom of Victor Emmanuel became widely extended, and a great step had been taken towards the goal. Savoy and Nice were given up to France. This greatly angered Garibaldi, who was a native of Nice, and who was also much displeased that Savoy, the "cradle of the royal house," should be severed from Italy. Cavour bore his impassioned reproaches with quiet dignity, refraining from speaking a word which might bring about dissension and weaken the cause to which both he and Garibaldi had devoted their lives.

The next step in the onward course changed the King of Sardinia into the King of Italy, and this was due to the generalship and daring of Garibaldi. In 1860 he led an army of volunteers into Sicily and took possession of the island, which formed part of the kingdom of Naples, then under the despotic rule of Francis II. Then the Italian leader crossed to Naples and entered the city in triumph. Marching northward, he met Victor Emmanuel, whom he hailed as King of Italy. In the next year the first parliament of Italy met at Turin, and the coveted title was formally granted to Victor Emmanuel. The work, however, was not yet done. Venetia in the north-east and the papal states in the centre of the peninsula still remained outside the new kingdom.

In 1866 Prussia fought with Austria. Victor

Emmanuel saw his opportunity. He allied himself with Prussia, and at the end of seven weeks' war found himself in possession of Venetia. The capital of the new kingdom was now at Florence, but the Italians were anxious to make Rome their royal city. The pope, however, was supported by France, and though Garibaldi twice made an attempt to capture the ancient city, he was not successful. Then came the Franco-German War. The French troops were recalled from Rome. An Italian army entered the city, and the inhabitants, by an overwhelming vote, chose Victor Emmanuel as their king. The papal states became part of the kingdom of Italy, and thus the temporal power of the pope came to an end. It dated, as we know, from the time of Pepin the Short, king of the Western Franks.

“The work to which we consecrated our lives,” wrote Victor Emmanuel in a proclamation to his people, “is at last accomplished. After long trials Italy is restored to herself and to Rome. . . . The future opens before us rich in happy promise; it is for us to respond to the favours of Providence by showing ourselves worthy to represent amongst the great nations of the earth the glorious part of Italy and of Rome.”

THE END

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